

ABSTRACT

Title of Document: ANALYSIS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
TEACHER EDUCATION POLICY IN CHINA
SINCE THE 1990S: A CASE STUDY

Jun Li, Doctor of Philosophy, 2006

Directed By: Professor Jing Lin, Department of Education
Policy and Leadership, the University of
Maryland at College Park

China has at present the largest system of basic education and the largest teacher work force in the world. The teacher education system plays a critical role in preparing an enormous army of qualified teachers for the basic education system.

Since the 1990s, China's teacher education has been undergoing radical transformations: The vision and mission of teacher education have changed significantly; teachers' roles are redefined in order for them to respond to the new demands of the dramatically changing society; the "market" for preparing teachers is shared by various competitors; new degrees, programs as well as curricula are designed for prospective teachers. The implementation process of the national policy of reform, however, has not been paid enough attention.

This study looks into the complicated implementation process of China's teacher education reform policy since the 1990s from the rational and critical

frameworks. It has been designed with a case study approach to investigate and understand how a higher teacher education institution has responded to the national policy of teacher education reform. The study focuses on changes in institutional goals, strategies the case university adopted, and examines communication channels of policy, conflicts among stakeholders, and barriers arising from internal and external factors for the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform. The study serves as an explanatory instrument to understand what the national policy of teacher education reform in China is about, to explore how the teacher education policy was implemented in a higher teacher education institution, and to reveal the unique policy implications derived from the Chinese experience.

The findings of this study reveal that the implementation of the national policy was a linearly developed process to resolve the substantial problems of the teacher education system by unitary policy players, viewed from the rational framework. The policy action was advanced and developed to meet the need of the rapidly changing society. The critical framework suggested that the stakeholders of the national policy were diverse conflicting groups who worked together to implement the national policy while at the same time they conflicted with each other on many fronts for their own legitimacy and benefits. The implementation process became a heatedly contested process for redistribution of political and economic benefits among the interest groups.

In addition, this study identifies that there were severe institutional barriers accounting for the success or failure of the implementation of the national policy. These barriers include stakeholders' adverse attitudes, authoritarian traditional culture,

and overlapping implementation of other national policies. Theoretical reflections are rendered from the findings for implementation studies. Specifically, the role of the cultural dimension in the implementation process is discussed. Finally, recommendations are proposed for implementation practices and for future research.

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IN CHINA SINCE THE 1990S: A CASE STUDY

By

Jun Li

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Advisory Committee:
Professor Jing Lin, Chair
Professor Steven J. Klees
Professor Hanne Mawhinney
Professor Carol Ann Spreen
Professor Linda Valli

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ACRONYMS

CCE (The Central Council of Education, Japan)
CPC (The Communist Party of China)
CPCCC (The Communist Party of China Central Committee)
CTE (The Commission on Teacher Education, Japan)
DTE (The Department of Teacher Education, China)
Ed.M. (The Educational Master Degree in Subject Teaching)
ICDE (The International Commission on the Development of Education, UNESCO)
MOE (The Ministry of Education, China)
NCEE (The National College Entrance Examination, China)
NCER (The National Council on Education Reform, Japan)
NPC (The National People's Congress, China)
SCE (The State Commission of Education, China)
SCNPC (The Standing Commission of National People's Congress, China)
UTAHEI (The Undergraduate Teaching Assessment on Higher Education Institutions, China)
WTO (The World Trade Organization)

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

China has at present the largest system of basic education and the largest teacher work force in the world. As of 2005, 10.4 million teachers were instructing 196.9 million students who were enrolled in 444,700 elementary and secondary schools in China (the Ministry of Education (MOE), 2006, May). China's teacher education system plays a critical role in preparing an enormous army of qualified teachers for its basic education system to improve the quality of the whole citizenry (Guan, 2003).

Since the 1990s, China's teacher education has been undergoing radical transformations, moving from an independent, closed training system in which normal universities/provincial colleges of education are the sole providers of teacher education, to an open model in which both normal universities/provincial colleges of education and comprehensive universities provide the services. This transformation has tremendous impacts on teacher education institutions: The vision and mission of teacher education have changed significantly; teachers' roles are redefined in order

for them to respond to the new demands of the dramatically changing society; the “market” for preparing teachers is shared by various competitors; and new degrees, programs as well as curricula are designed for prospective teachers.

These significant institutional changes have been brought about by the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform since the 1990s. Although there are enormous cross-national studies focusing on China’s reform of teacher education since the 1990s, very few of them conduct policy analyses with appropriate theoretical frameworks, and almost none of them focus on the implementation process of the national policy of teacher education reform.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

Implementation is part of policymaking (Hogwood & Gunn, 1984, pp. 196-218). Gerston (2004) holds that implementation is a “follow-through” component of the policymaking process and “represents the conscious conversion of policy plans into reality” (p. 94). In this sense, policy and implementation are inextricably an interwoven process by which policy goals are associated with policy outcome.

Implementation studies are crucial to understanding the complicated policy process. Implementation studies, however, had not received much attention in policy analyses until *New Towns in Town* was published by Martha Derthick in 1972 and *Implementation* was published by Jeffrey L. Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky in 1973. According to Pressman and Wildavsky (1984), implementation studies require researchers to understand that “apparently simple sequences of events depend on

complex chains of reciprocal interaction” (p. xxv). The studies of implementation have become a growing field ever since.

In China, in the intricate process of implementing the national policy of teacher education reform, higher teacher education institutions have made tremendous efforts to satisfy the proposed goals set by the national policy. These efforts include updating institutional visions and goals, initiatives for organizational and administrative transformations, upgrading educational programs and curricula, and adjusting policies for recruiting prospective students. Furthermore, higher teacher education institutions have adopted major strategies and techniques, such as using its official channels and alternative means to inform the public with the lofty goal outlined by the national policy, to enhance the implementation of the national policy. Meantime, the process involves a large number of policy implementers and participants, such as the Communist Party of China (CPC) leaders, presidents, deans, other administrators, faculties and students, policy analysts, and so forth.

This study looks into this complicated implementation process of China’s teacher education reform since the 1990s. It has been designed with a case study approach to investigate and understand how a higher teacher education institution has responded to the national policy of teacher education reform. It serves as an explanatory instrument to understand what the policy of teacher education reform in China is about, to explore how the teacher education policy was implemented and who play what roles in a higher teacher education institution, and to reveal the unique policy implications derived from the Chinese experience.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research adopts Creswell's model by which the entire study is reduced to a single, overarching question and several sub-questions (Creswell, 1998, pp. 99-105).

The central research question of this study is:

How has a teacher education institution in China implemented the national policy of teacher education reform since the 1990s?

The central question can be divided into several sub-questions, i.e., topic-oriented questions. Stake (1995) articulated that topic-oriented questions call for needed information for description of the case (Stake, 1995, p. 25), i.e., helping direct research attention and guide investigation units. In this research, the following five sub-questions help me to look for clues and needed information to answer the central question. As listed in the following, these sub-questions will "explain specifically" what the research attempts to learn or understand (Maxwell, 1996, p. 51).

1. What policies have been put forward in China's teacher education reform since the 1990s and what is its institutional and sociopolitical context?
 - a. What is the institutional and sociopolitical context of China's teacher education reform?
 - b. What is China's national policy of teacher education reform since the 1990s?
 - c. How have the major policy documents identified policy rationales, problems and goals, and how do they offer guidelines and strategies to achieve the purposed goals?
2. How is the teacher education reform perceived and interpreted by local policy implementers and participants?
 - a. How are teachers' new identities defined by the national policy generally perceived and interpreted by local policy implementers and participants?
 - b. How is the national policy of teacher education reform generally perceived and interpreted by local policy implementers and participants?
3. How have teacher education institutions reshaped their institutional goals and strategies to respond to the national policy?

- a. How are the institutional goals reshaped by teacher education institutions to respond to the national policy?
 - b. What are the institutional strategies made by teacher education institutions to respond to the national policy?
4. How have local policy players been involved in the implementation process of the national policy?
 - a. How has the national policy been channeled to local policy players?
 - b. How have local implementers and participants played their corresponding roles in the implementation process?
5. What institutional changes have taken place due to the implementation of the national reform? How are these institutional changes evaluated? And what are the problems and challenges?
 - a. How are the institutional changes perceived by stakeholders?
 - b. How are the outcomes of the implementation evaluated?
 - c. What are the problems and challenges in the implementation process and how are they addressed by teacher education institutions?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE POLICY ANALYSIS

The study is significant chiefly in three dimensions. First, the existing policy analyses in China's studies show that the policy analyst community has paid little attention to the implementation process of teacher education reform. Although the shortage of implementation studies in China poses great challenges for my research, this study would be a pioneering research which serves as an operational framework, and a theoretical grounding, to open the "black box" of implementation process (Palumbo & Calista, 1990, pp. 3-17; Jenkins, 1978, p. 23) in the Chinese context.

Secondly, Majone and Wildavsky (1979) argue that implementation studies are able to identify constraints "hidden" in the planning stage of policymaking (p. 166), and dispute that implementation only "translates a policy mandate into action" (p. 167). In other words, implementation is "the continuation of politics by other means"

(Majone & Wildavsky, 1979, p. 175). From this perspective, an implementation study is able to function as an instrument to identify hidden policy problems neglected by policymakers in the planning stage. As a result, this study serves as a tool to identify possible hidden policy problems which were not initially laid out by policymakers, and provides recommendations for future policy actions.

Thirdly, as Latin American scholarship has contributed dependency theory and “Freirean” critical theories for education (So, 1990, pp. 91-109; Freire, 2003), this study may help break the hegemony of European and North American scholarship in policy analyses. Beyond the empirical evidence and theoretical frameworks on which Western policy analysis heavily relies, this study offers a Chinese perspective located within the unique traditional Chinese culture. China traditionally has an official-centered bureaucracy featured with an authoritative culture and a centralized administrative system for thousands of years. One of the major tasks for this study is to discover how the official-centered bureaucratic system played a role in the implementation process of the national policy of teacher education reform. The unique findings, critical reflections and valuable experiences drawn from the Chinese case may shed new light on implementation studies as well as on teacher education reform.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Public Policy is “whatever governments choose to do or not to do” (Dye, 2002, p. 1). Generally, it refers to “a purposeful course of action” advanced or authorized by higher institutional levels of the policy system in pursuit of influencing lower levels

or units of the system. In this sense, it is usually viewed as “the dynamic and value-laden process through which a political system handles a public problem,” and it “includes a government’s expressed intentions and official enactments as well as its consistent patterns of activity and inactivity” (Fowler, 2000, p. 9).

Implementation is part of public policymaking (Hogwood & Gunn, 1984, pp. 196-218), and is mostly viewed by policy analysts as an interactive process. For example, Pressman and Wildavsky (1984) define implementation as “a process of interaction between the setting of goals and actions geared to achieving them” (p. xxiii). Gerston (2004) holds that implementation is a “follow-through” component of the policymaking process and “represents the conscious conversion of policy plans into reality” (p. 94). In this sense, policy and implementation are a closely interwoven process by which policy goals are associated with policy outcome, responding to environmental changes.

Policy Analysis is viewed as “an applied social science discipline that employs multiple methods of inquiry, in contexts of argumentation and public debate, to create, critically assess, and communicate policy-relevant knowledge” (Dunn, 1994, pp. xiii-xiv). Generally, policy analysis involves “a rigorous search for the causes and consequences of public policies” (Dye, 2002, p. 6). Simply put, it is the study of who gets what, when and how (Lasswell, 1950).

Research Framework is a general theoretical guidance for policy analysis. A research framework is generally a simplified abstraction or representation of some aspects of the real world (Dye, 2002, p. 11). As policy analyses are seriously complicated by social issues, research frameworks can be further complicated and

diversified. For example, Lester and Stewart (2000) lay out an array of nine specific research frameworks for policy analyses (pp. 36-42). These research frameworks are sometimes independent, but most of the time they may overlap with each other.

Case Study is widely accepted as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2003, p. 13). Yin categorizes case studies into explanatory, descriptive and explorative inquiries (Yin, 2003, pp. 3-9). This case study is an explanatory inquiry for it aims to understand how a teacher education institution has implemented the national policy of teacher education reform in China since the 1990s.

Teacher Education generally denotes two major forms of education, i.e., preservice preparation and inservice professional development, for those who are to be or are already in the teaching profession in schools. In China, preservice education of teachers is provided by two to three year normal schools, three to four year normal universities/colleges, and inservice education of teachers is provided by two year teacher schools, two to three year normal professional colleges, two to three year regional/provincial colleges of education, and internet teachers colleges. Teacher education programs usually include qualification/certificate studies, undergraduate studies and graduate studies.

Normal Universities are the most popular form of higher education institution for training teachers in China. All normal universities, including key national ones and provincial ones, are public-funded in China. Because provincial normal universities enroll the largest student body of teacher education nationally, they

become the focus of this study.

Yangtze Normal University is a provincial key normal university selected as the case for this study. It is the largest university in the province of Yangtze for training teachers. For the purposes of protecting the identity of the case and the site, Yangtze is used as a pseudonym to substitute its real name of the normal university and the province.

STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

The thesis begins with a review of the literature on teachers' roles. Then, it provides a brief introduction of institutional settings of teacher education, the national policy of China's teacher education and its sociopolitical context. It then describes in detail the case selected by my study. Multiple perspectives, i.e., the rational and critical frameworks, are examined to look into how the case has responded to the national reform. The final section will focus on policy implications drawn from the China's case of policy implementation.

Specifically, Chapter One (this chapter) outlines the purpose and significance of this study, the central and topic-oriented sub-questions. It also defines the working terms used by this study.

Chapter Two begins with a brief introduction of China's political and educational settings. It then outlines the history of China's modern teacher education by reviewing its distinct stages of development. Current provisions and recent policy efforts for teacher education are also systematically explored. The Intersection of the

national policy of teacher education reform with other major national policies of education such as the expansion of higher education is also reviewed. Finally, studies on the nation reform of teacher education are examined. The chapter highlights a clear shortage of implementation studies on China's teacher education reform and hence the need for this study.

Chapter Three reviews literature on the new identities of teachers and the worldwide trends in teacher professionalization and teacher education reform. It gives a comprehensive understanding of how the new identities of teachers and the teaching profession are defined by theorists from various perspectives. It provides an institutional background for us to understand how the reform of teacher education has developed in various countries similarly and divergently. This chapter also explains how the Chinese policymakers responded the new identities of teachers and the worldwide teacher education reform and how they integrated the international experiences into Chinese context.

Chapter Four explores the theoretical frameworks this study adopts as the general guidance for inquiry. It introduces an analytic model as the operational instrument with five variables for data collection, analysis, and presentation of findings. The rational and critical frameworks guide this study to explore the major dimensions of the implementation process of the national policy. This chapter elaborates how the functional analytic model is chosen and how it serves as a platform to limit its key units of analysis for practical operation of the inquiry.

Chapter Five gives reasons as to why the case study approach is used in this study. It introduces how the single case was selected, how the case was accessed and

how the interviewees were identified, following the strict requirements of qualitative research. Moreover, it also details the process of data collection and how the data were analyzed with validity and ethical considerations.

Chapter Six introduces Yangtze Normal University as the case selected for this study. It sketches the history and institutional development of Yangtze Normal University and portrays the university's organizational settings and the College of Educational Science. The relationship the university has with the central and local governments is also discussed. The brief introduction of Yangtze Normal University provides us a primary understanding of what a typical teacher education institution looks like in China.

Chapter Seven examines how the national policy of teacher education reform was channeled from the national level to the university/department/faculty level at Yangtze Normal University, and how the institutional goals were oriented to meet the requirements of the national policy for teacher education reform. It begins with an introduction about how the administration system works in Yangtze Normal University. It looks into how the university administration system functions in a top-down, linear policy delivery system for the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform. It further reveals how Yangtze Normal University employs its official communication system to ensure the success of the policy delivery, and how the implementation goals in Yangtze Normal University were deviated from the requirements of the national policy of teacher education reform.

Chapter Eight probes the dynamic process of the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform in China. It presents how stakeholders at

Yangtze Normal University have dynamically involved themselves and participated in the implementation process of the national policy of teacher education reform. It also details the implementation strategies and actions that Yangtze Normal University has taken, and how these strategies and actions have changed or failed to change the social status and public image of the university. In addition, it investigates how the outcomes of the implementation of the national policy were evaluated officially and individually.

Chapter Nine examines the major adverse factors and institutional barriers that affected the outcomes of the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform in Yangtze Normal University. The adverse factors to the implementation practice include the university leaders' weak awareness of the national policy, the decline of teaching quality, and problems arising from the official-centered bureaucracy. In addition, the National Undergraduate Teaching Assessment, the radical expansion of higher education, and the National College Entrance Examination are examined as the institutional barriers from the larger educational social contexts, affecting the success of the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform. All of these constraints and impediments created high political and economic tensions, conflicts and struggles throughout the implementation process. Therefore, they explained the inconsistent outcomes of the implementation of the national policy.

Chapter Ten, the final chapter, revisits the research questions and reflects upon the findings of this study based on the research frameworks selected, i.e., the rational and critical frameworks. When the research questions were reviewed in the beginning

of this chapter, dissimilar interpretations are captured by the rational and critical frameworks to explain the complicated implementation process of the national policy of teacher education reform in Yangtze Normal University. The contrasting power and limitations of the two frameworks, the functional analytic model and the culture dimension in the implementation process are discussed for policy studies. Keeping in mind the valuable Chinese experiences, several recommendations are proposed for the practice of policy implementation. Finally, I propose future research questions which will extend the scope and understanding of policy implementation beyond this study.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORY AND POLICIES OF TEACHER EDUCATION REFORM IN CHINA: A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

This chapter begins with a brief introduction of the sociopolitical context in which the policy case is situated. It outlines the history of modern teacher education in China by reviewing the various stages of development. Current provisions and recent policy efforts for teacher education are also examined extensively. Finally, existing studies on the national reform of teacher education are reviewed.

THE SOCIOPOLITICAL CONTEXT

The Political Power Structure

With a heavy tradition of central governance for more than two thousand years, the People's Republic of China was founded under the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in 1949. Since then the CPC has been the sole political party in power in the country. Under *the Constitution* amended in 1999, the socialist political system led by the CPC is the fundamental system of the People's Republic of China.

The CPC is a unified political party organized according to its constitution and

the principle of democratic centralism. It has both central and local organizations. At the top are the Political Bureau and its Standing Committee which are elected by the plenary session of the CPC Central Committee (CPCCC). The Political Bureau and its Standing Committee exercise the power of the CPCCC and the National Congress of the CPC. CPC's leadership over the country is mainly political, ideological and organizational, as reflected in the following five aspects:

- To organize and exercise leadership over the country's legislative and law enforcement activities;
- To maintain leadership over the armed forces;
- To provide leadership and manage the work of officials;
- To organize and mobilize the society; and
- To give importance to ideological and political work.

The CPC has various agencies at central and local governments and public institutions all over the country.

The National People's Congress (NPC) and its provincial/local congresses form the fundamental political system for the state power in China. The National People's Congress and local people's congresses are established through democratic elections, responsible to and supervised by the people. All the ethnic minorities in China are entitled to appropriate representation. The National People's Congress is legitimately the highest organ of state power. It is observed, however, that the NPC has been politically controlled and manipulated by the CPC. For a long time it is known to play only a rubber stamp role. However, in recent years, its function has increased, as representatives from all levels have become more vocal and independent in their decision making. Many representatives not only criticize policies, but some cast negative votes as well.

Local people's congresses are local organs of state power. State administrative, judicial and procuratorial organs are created by, responsible to and supervised by the people's congresses. The NPC exercises the following functions and powers:

- To amend the Constitution and supervise the enforcement of the Constitution, and to enact and amend basic laws governing criminal offences, civil affairs, the state organs, etc.;
- To elect the President and the Vice President of the People's Republic of China, and to decide on the choice of the Premier of the State Council upon nomination by the President, and on the choice of the Vice Premiers, State Councilors, Ministers in charge of ministries or commissions, the Auditor-General and the Secretary-general of the State Council upon nomination by the Premier;
- To elect the President of the Supreme People's Court and the Procurator-General of the Supreme People's Procuratorate;
- To examine and approve the plan for national economic and social development and the report on its implementation, and the state budget and the report on its implementation;
- To approve the establishment of provinces, autonomous regions, special administrative regions, and so on;
- To decide on questions of war and peace.

The administrative system in China refers to a series of regulations and practices in regard to the composition, system, power and activities of the state administrative organs. The State Council is the highest executive organ of state power, as well as the highest organ of state administration. The main responsibilities of the State Council are to carry out the principles and policies of the CPC as well as the regulations and laws adopted by the NPC, and to deal with such affairs as China's internal politics, diplomacy, national defense, finance, economy, culture and education. Under the current constitution, the State Council exercises the power of administrative legislation and leadership, submission of proposals, economic management, diplomatic administration, social administration, and other powers

granted by the NPC and its standing committee. The system exercises unified leadership over local state administrative organs at various levels throughout the country, regulates the specific division of power and function of the state administrative organs at the central level and the provincial, autonomous regional and municipal level.

The State Council is composed of the Premier, Vice Premiers, Ministers in charge of ministries, Ministers in charge of commissions, the Auditor-general and the Secretary-general. Ministries, commissions, the People's Bank of China and administrations are departments that make up the State Council. The Ministry of Education (MOE), renamed from the State Commission of Education (SCE) in 1998, is one of the State Council's administrative units responsible for national educational undertakings and language work.¹



Figure 2.1. The simplified political system of China. Adapted from the Central People's Government of China Web Portal (<http://www.gov.cn>).

¹ For more information about China's political system, please refer to: Yin, Z. Q. (2004) and Dreyer, J. R. (2005).

A Centralized Education System

In the post-Mao era, especially since the late 1980s, the decentralization and deregulation of the central government along with the adoption of an open door policy have opened up rooms for various initiatives of reform in education. However, although local governments and NGOs are enjoying more freedom from the central government, the political system remains highly centralized. The nature of such a unified political system is characterized with a one-way flow of power. Policy moves asymmetrically from the upper level to the lower level, from the national/central level to the regional/local level. The CPCCC, the NPC and the State Council, are the three most powerful governmental institutions. Among these governmental institutions, the CPCCC is the core actor in terms of national policymaking, while the State Council is the major administrative actor.

Integrated within the polity, China's economy has been regulated by a central planning system. Since 1984, national policy actions have called for the decentralization of economic planning and for increased reliance on market forces to regulate economic activities. The economy expanded rapidly during the early 1990s as the government continued to ease controls. The rapid economic growth was spurred by the widespread marketization, commercialization and privatization of education at all levels, and by China's becoming a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001. Today, China continues to be in the midst of economic transition from a central planning system to a free market system, though "many of the main drivers of the Chinese economy remain in state hands" (Aldonas, 2003, October 1).

Similar to the polity and economy, Chinese education system is structured as a centralized sector. Teacher education is also embedded within this centralized system. Traditionally, teacher education used to be a public “free lunch” system: Students were subsidized by the government as long as they were able to gain entrance through the extremely competitive National College Entrance Examination (NCEE). The Department of Teacher Education (DTE), one of the sub-units of MOE, routinely administers, supervises and governs teacher education systems at the national level, and monitors teacher education systems at the regional/provincial/local levels. Many national policies for teacher education are initiated, developed, and implemented by DTE, but some critical national policies, such as the massification of higher education, restructuring of teacher education systems, etc., are initiated and approved at the ministerial level.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CHINA’S MODERN TEACHER EDUCATION

Teacher education in Chinese is called *shifan jiaoyu*. Literally, *shifan* means teacher and teacher’s role model, *jiaoyu* has the meaning of educating and nurturing. Both *shifan* and *jiaoyu* were neologisms in China around the 1890s, adopted from Japanese terms. Although China has a long tradition of respecting teachers and attaching importance to education prior to the 1890s, there was no real training system for the teaching profession.

Establishment (1897-1911)

The first school for training teachers in China was created about two hundred

years later than the first Western normal school, the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools founded by Jean Baptiste de La Salle (1651-1719) in Reims, France. In 1897, the Nanyang University Normal Institute (*Nanyang Gongxue Shifanyuan*) was founded in Shanghai by Sheng Xuanhuai. The Institute was the first normal school for training professional teachers in modern China (The Editorial Board of *Educational Almanac*, 1948, p. 909). On May 21, 1902, the first independent normal school, Hubei Normal School (*Hubei Shifan Xuetang*), was founded by Zhang Zhidong (Chen, 1981, p. 117; Huang, 1991, pp. 67-80). Later in the same year, the first private normal school, Tongzhou Private Normal School (*Tongzhou Sili Shifan Xuexiao*) was founded by Zhang Jian in Nantong, Jiangsu Province (Liu, 1984, pp. 7-8). In addition, the first national normal school, the Imperial University Normal Institute (*Jingshi Daxuetang Shifanguan*) was founded by the late Qing government in 1902.

Unlike the Western tradition that initially trained teachers for religious purposes, the Chinese system was established for political purposes. The prosperity of the Qing Empire had waned steadily during the early 19th century, and continued to decline afterwards due to serious internal problems such as bad harvests, natural disasters, overpopulation, administrative corruption, social unrest, and the increasing power of foreign imperialism. Suffering from the noticeable events including Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864), the Boxer Uprising (1900), military defeats in war with Britain (1842 and 1864), with France (1884-1885) and with Japan (1895); and dozens of treaties such as the Treaty of Nanking (1842), the Treaty of Tianjin (1858) and the Treaty of Shimonoseki (1895), the Qing government tried to revive its regime with various

reforms, i.e., the Self-Strengthening Movement (1861-1895), the Hundred Days' Reform (1898) and the New Reform (1901-1911). These political reforms initiated radical programs of institutional change and economic modernization, and consistently sought to develop new practical talents instead of refining traditional Confucian intelligentsia. Subsequently, it became widely accepted that renovating the old education system and establishing modern schools were vital and urgent tasks. A number of politicians and educators agreed that teacher education was key for meeting the political goals for national survival and self-strengthening. Thanks to these political reforms, modern teacher education became institutionalized in 1897.

In 1902, the first national legislation (*renyin xuezhi*) to address the creation of a modern school system was passed. Teacher education was included, and the legislation endorsed Western practical technology and science. *Guimao xuezhi*, the 1903 legislation, revamped *renyin xuezhi* and was enacted in 1904 (Qian & Jin, 1996, p. 92; Sun, 2000, p. 344). In *guimao xuezhi*, teacher education was envisioned as an independent school system for the first time in China's history (Chen, 1979, p. 183; Gu, 1981, p. 243; Sun, 1971, p. 514). For example, *guimao xuezhi* required every county or prefecture to open a junior normal school (*chuji shifan xuetang*) and every province to open a senior normal school (*gaoji shifan xuetang*), in order to train teachers for local elementary and middle schools, respectively. By 1907, there were 271 normal schools and 282 teacher training institutes with a total number of 36,608 students, and 36,974 certified teachers (Ministry of Education Bureau of General Affairs, 1907, p. 23; pp. 33-34; pp. 60-61). In addition, there were a total of 15 girls' normal schools from 1904 to 1910 (Chen, 1936, as cited in Du, 1995, pp. 349-351).

As many researchers have pointed out, at the beginning of China's teacher education system imitated and transplanted Japan's education system as a model (Chen, 1979, pp. 167-202; Hayhoe, 1984, pp. 35-37; Qian & Jin, 1996, pp. 50-214; Sun, 2000, pp. 342-347). Since the 1902 and 1903 legislations were copied from the Japanese education system, its teacher education system was also borrowed from Japan (Liu, 1984, pp. 4-26). In fact, the term *shifan jiaoyu* was taken verbatim in Japanese characters from *shihan kyōiku*, the Japanese terminology for teacher education. China's emulation of Japan was explained by the two neighbors sharing "geographical vicinity, cultural similarity, and identical need for national self-strengthening" (Shen, 1994, p. 60). Moreover, the increasingly shaky Qing Empire viewed Japan as a successful example having undertaken self-strengthening reform (the Meiji Restoration) to compete with Western powers.

Institutionalization and Professionalization (1912-1949)

The Qing Empire's self-strengthening attempts were unsuccessful, and it finally collapsed in 1911 as a result of the Republican Revolution led by Sun Yat-sen. This was a critical turning point in China's history since the revolution overthrew the feudal system that had existed for more than two thousand years. In his inaugural address on January 1, 1912, Provisional President Sun Yat-sen announced that the task for his government was to "sweep out the baneful influence of autocracy and build the Republic to meet the goals of the revolution and the will of all citizens" (Sun, 1912, January 1, cited in Chen, 1981, p. 218). Sun Yat-sen's "Three Principles of the People"² established a solid foundation for the goals and visions of educational

² It refers to the Principle of Minzu (civic-nationalism, i.e., government of the people), the

establishments, which were expected to shift feudal system to the new democratic Republic.

Shortly after the Republic was established, the new administration passed several legislations on schools in 1912 and 1913, two of them being *the Teacher Education Act* and *the Normal School Regulations* in 1912, to guide the objectives, programs, and curricula for teacher education. Through these legislations and regulations, teacher education was instituted with two levels: Normal schools for training elementary school teachers, and normal universities/colleges for training secondary school teachers. Normal schools were provincial while normal universities/colleges were national. A district system for normal schools was set up in 1912 for the first time in China's history in order to match various local circumstances (Sun, 1971, pp. 530), followed by a licensing system for elementary school teachers on April 28, 1916 (Chen, 1981, p. 278; Sun, 1971, pp. 531-533). The latter was the first certification system for teachers in modern China.³ In addition, women were included in formal programs of the teacher education system for the first time in China's history. Peking Women's Higher Normal College (*Beijing Gaodeng Nüzi Shifan Xuexiao*) was upgraded in April 1919 from Peking Women's Normal School (*Beijing Nüzi Shifan Xuexiao*), becoming the first independent higher teacher education institution for women in China's history (Liu, 1984, p. 41). The initiatives for teacher education in 1912 and 1913 were revolutionary and effective in terms of

Principle of Minquan (power of the people, i.e., government by the people), and the Principle of Minsheng (welfare or livelihood of the people, i.e., government for the people).

³ I disagree here with a widely accepted inference that China's teacher certification system was first established in 1996. For the inference, see: Department of Teacher Education of Ministry of Education, *Theories and Practices of Teacher Professionalization (Jiaoshi Zhuanyehua de Lilun yu Shijian)*, (Beijing: People's Education Press, 2001), p. 225.

providing new visions and establishment of programs and institutions. By 1915, there were 231 normal schools (boys' schools: 135; girls' schools: 96), with a total of 26,679 students (male: 18,775; female: 7,904) (Ministry of Education, 1915, p. 19). There were many critics on the 1912 and 1913 legislations, however. The criticism was that the bills were still copied from the Japanese education system with minor revision, and remained largely inapplicable to China's settings. They were very rigid and unable to adjust to a nation with varied regions and complicated socio-economic stratification.

The changing political circumstances greatly challenged the Republic reforms of education. The 1912 and 1913 legislations were impeded by the restoration of feudal system in 1915 and 1916 led by Yuan Shikai, one of the most powerful politicians and notorious warlords in the late Qing government. Beginning in 1917 and led by Cheng Duxiu and other leading intellectuals, the New Cultural Movement waged a revolutionary culture war against conventionalism, advocating Western values of democracy and technology and criticizing traditional Confucianism. The May Fourth Movement in 1919, kindled by the Chinese government's signing of the Treaty of Versailles, ignited the New Cultural Movement that profoundly changed Chinese politics, culture, education and normative values. During this time, Chinese students returned from abroad, such as Chen Duxiu, Lu Xun, Hu Shi and Tao Xingzhi, who introduced China to various Western philosophies and values. Among them, the pragmatism and scientism from the U.S. were the two most influential schools to bring new incentives for education reform. John Dewey made a two-year visit to China from May 1919 to 1921, which fuelled educational reform in China.

Passed on November 1, 1922, the new legislation, *renxu xuezhì*, radically shifted the Japanese model of school system to an American one. This model was characterized by: Flexibility and feasibility for various local conditions; a 6-3-3 system with education levels designed according to student ages; and distinctive secondary schools (Qian & Jin, 1996, pp. 284-300). Under *renxu xuezhì*, teacher education was planned in two levels: Normal schools and normal universities/colleges. For elementary schoolteacher preparation, normal schools were generally merged into comprehensive secondary schools. Some provinces even decided to stop providing subsidies for normal school students, resulting in a decline of enrollment in teacher education. Normal universities/colleges still were positioned as independent institutions, but in practice there were only one teacher education institution, i.e., Beijing Higher Normal School, while other higher teacher education institutions were merged into comprehensive universities. Although the 1922 legislation was praised as “a milestone in modern China’s educational history” (Sun, 2000, p. 397) in terms of its flexible school years, operational adaptability and profound influence, teacher education was actually undermined (Sun, 1971, p. 539). Liu (1984) documented that the number of “normal schools reduced by 63%, students declined by 49%, and budgets were cut by 34%” from 1922 to 1928 (p. 54). The declining teacher education began to revive in the early 1930s. From 1932 to 1935, the Nationalist Government made great efforts to restore teacher education to its pre-1922 system. Normal schools were removed from comprehensive secondary schools, and some higher learning institutions became independent normal universities/colleges for training teachers again.

From 1921 to 1949, a succession of wars broke out in China: the First Civil War between the nationalists and first the warlords and then the communists (1921-1927); the Second Civil War between the nationalists and the communists again (1927-1937); the Anti-Japanese War (1937-1945); and the Third Civil War in which the communists defeated the nationalists. Although the nation went through these bitter hardships, the institutionalization of the modern teacher education system and professionalization of teachers were remarkable and impressive. There were 364 normal schools with 48,793 students in 1937, by 1946 the number of normal schools increased to 902 with a total of 245,609 students (The Editorial Board of *Educational Almanac*, 1948, pp. 929-930).

Re-establishment, Setbacks and Restoration (1949-1993)

Soon after the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, the Western powers turned their backs to this newly born socialist regime while the Soviet Union supported its genesis. Before they broke their ties some years later, China and the Soviet Union built a strong partnership which allowed China to obtain valuable aid as well as ideological support from the Soviet Union. As a result of this new political alliance, China's education system began to emulate the Soviet model, which featured independent specialized higher learning institutions.

The new government, with dreams of eliminating illiteracy and providing universal education for all school-age children in the shortest time possible, immediately re-established teacher education and set it as one of national priorities. In August 1951, the First National Meeting on Teacher Education called for re-establishing the district system for normal schools (Wang, 1997, p. 8). Two months

later, the State Council publicized *the Decision on School System Reform* (*Guanyu gaige xuezhi de jue ding*) which clearly urged that teacher education systems be set up independently in the national school systems. Based on this decision, the MOE promulgated *the Regulations on Higher Normal Institutions (Draft)* (*Guanyu gaodeng shifan xuexiao de guiding*) in 1952.

During this time, the Soviet teacher education system was adopted, which remained for more than two decades (Chen, Zhu, Hu, Guo, & Sun, 2003, p. 7; Pepper, 1996, p. 149). Under this model, China solely relied on an independent teacher training system and teachers were exclusively prepared by normal schools, normal universities/colleges, and provincial/regional colleges of education (*jiaoyu xueyuan*). By 1953, there were a total of 31 independent normal universities/colleges nationwide (China National Institute for Educational Research, 1984, pp. 90-91).

The national policy of “reorganization of colleges and departments” (*yuanxi tiaozheng*) brought tremendous changes to the teacher education system in the mid-1950s. For example, East China Normal University was founded in Shanghai in 1951 on the basis of several private universities, by combining their departments of education from Fudan University, Aurora University (*Zhengdan Daxue*), Datong University, St. Johns University (*Shengyuehan Daxue*), and Shanghai University in 1951 and 1952. Although departments of education used to be integrated within comprehensive universities during the Nationalist period before 1949, they were now affiliated with the newly established or combined normal universities/colleges.

For practical purposes, education was tightly embodied in political life during this time. Since the late 1950s, the Chinese government repeatedly claimed that

education must serve proletarian politics (*jiaoyu bixu wei wuchan jieji zhengzhi fuwu*).

Teacher education, like other fields, was highly interwoven with politics while its other functions were largely neglected. Because of this, teacher education was fundamentally weakened and even destroyed in many places during the ten-year Great Culture Revolution (1966-1976). Political-ideological movements and struggles hampered the whole system of teacher education, and student recruitment and enrollment ceased for several years. In addition, teachers' socio-political status declined overall. Teachers were criticized as "little bourgeois," and were "under great strain and many of them suffered considerable mental and, often, physical abuse" (Guo, 1999, April 14-19, p. 3). During this period of dramatic unrest, teachers were particularly persecuted. One author reports:

On the athletic field and farther inside, before a new four-story classroom building, I saw rows of teachers, about forty or fifty in all, with black ink poured over their heads and faces so that they were now in reality a "black gang." Hanging on their necks were placards with such words as "reactionary academic authority So-and-So," "class enemy So-and-So," "capitalist roader So-and-So," "corrupt ringleader So-and-So," all epithets taken from the newspapers. On each placard was a red cross, making the teachers look like condemned prisoners awaiting execution. They all wore dunce caps painted with similar epithets and carried dirty brooms, shoes and dusters on their backs. Hanging from their necks were pails filled with rocks. I saw the principal; the pail around his neck was so heavy that the wire had cut deep into his neck and he was staggering. All were barefoot, hitting broken gongs or pots as they walked around the field, crying out, "I am black gangster So-and So." Finally they all knelt down, burned incense and begged Mao Tse-tung to "pardon their crimes." (Ken Ling, 1972, p. 19, as cited in Lin, 1991, pp. 22-23)

Mao Zedong's death in 1976 did not immediately end the nightmare. After fiercely fighting against the Left extremists, progressive leaders such as Deng Xiaoping took over the political power of China. In 1978, with the government's adoption of the national policy of "Reform and Opening up" (*gaige kaifang*) in order to modernize the country, China's teacher education began to recover, and

experienced a radical transition and significant structural reform. In June 1980, the Fourth National Meeting on Teacher Education was held to reflect upon the previous 30 years' history of teacher education. The meeting recognized that teacher education was the foundation for national education development. Since then, teacher education at both pre-service and in-service levels has again become a national policy priority. For example, in 1983, elementary, junior secondary and senior secondary schoolteachers were required to complete a secondary teacher education program, a 2-3 year postsecondary teacher education program, and a 4 year college-level teacher education program, respectively. In addition, all national policy actions, such as *the Opinion on Strengthening and Promoting Teacher Education* in 1978, *the CPCCC's Decision on Reform of Educational System* in 1985, *the Opinion on the Plan for Basic Education Teachers and Teacher Education*, and *the Opinion on Strengthening and Promoting Teacher Education* in 1986, asserted that teacher education must be the first priority of education development. Furthermore, in order to create a favorable societal circumstance for teachers and teacher education, on September 10, 1985, the first National Teachers' Day since 1949 was instituted as a symbol of respecting teachers. Since then, the National Teachers' Day has been celebrated every year. These policies and strategies helped restore the regular functions of the teacher education system, and provided possibilities for future policy actions.

Retooling and New Development (1993-2004)

In the post-Mao era, and particularly since the early 1990s, Chinese people and political leaders have embraced a sweeping wave of marketization, privatization and decentralization. Although the socialist regime remains highly centralized, the

economic, education and cultural sectors enjoy certain freedoms that used to be strictly restricted by the central government. For example, the CPCCC has called for the decentralization of economic planning and for increased reliance on market forces to determine the prices of consumer goods.

In pursuit of China's national modernization, the new round of education reform aimed to expand education at all levels while maintaining or improving quality. The rapid expansion of compulsory education and postsecondary education generated urgent demand for highly-qualified teachers. The Soviet model of independent teacher education system could no longer meet the demand for a strong and massive teacher workforce. For example, the model of an independent teacher education system failed to meet the demands of preparing and training teacher workforce for a rapidly changing society, and rendered teacher education institutions to lack the capability to compete with other higher learning institutions such as comprehensive universities. Meanwhile, the Soviet model separated pre-service and in-service teacher education into two exclusive systems, in effect dissipating teacher education resources. The national campaign for quality education required professionalization of teachers. This was problematic, for there were still a large number of teachers with incompetent teacher education or certification. In rural schools, there were even many teachers without any certificates or qualifications of teacher education.

To respond to these challenges, policymakers initiated a retooling of the teacher education system to seek an overall structural adjustment of teacher education and further improvement to the teacher education system. The goals were the creation of a new status for teacher education and the improvement of educational qualification for

new teachers; completion of the establishment of continuing education for teachers; and significant improvement of the whole quality of the teacher workforce (The MOE, 2002, February 6). In sum, the goals of the policy action were to train enough qualified teachers and professionalize the manpower of teaching; to reform and optimize the teacher education system with diversity; and to improve the economic and social positions of teachers as professionals.

There were two stages in the retooling of teacher education systems since 1993. During the first stage (1993-1996), *the Guidelines for China's Education Reform and Development* were put into policy action in 1993 (The Communist Party of China Central Committee [CPCCC] & the State Council, 1993, February 13). Eight months later, *the Law of Teachers of the People's Republic of China* was enacted on October 31, 1993, symbolizing a new round of teacher education reform. This is the first law in China after 1949 for the profession of teachers. The law regulates the legal rights and responsibilities of teachers as professionals and mandates a national teacher certification system (1993, October 31). *The Ordinance of Teacher Qualification* implemented in 1995 requires candidate teachers to obtain at least one of seven licenses to teach (the State Council, 1995, December 12). Despite great expectations, the enforcement of these laws and regulations was limited, and teacher professionalization remained slow and ineffective. In this stage, the Chinese government made great efforts such as raising teachers' salaries to improve the treatment of teachers.

The second stage (1996-2004) of the retooling of teacher education systems was fueled by the Fifth National Meeting on Teacher Education held in 1996. *The*

Opinion on the Reform and Development of Teacher Education envisioned a teacher education system that mainly relies on independent normal universities/colleges but is also participated by comprehensive higher education institutions (The State Commission of Education [SCE], 1996, December 5). The new vision charted a new direction for restructuring of teacher education systems that included participants such as non-normal higher education institutions. With the twin influences of privatization and marketization, the Chinese government took substantial action to reorganize teacher education systems and address the teaching profession through some key strategies (The MOE, 1998, December 24; 2000, September 23; 2002, February 6; The CPCCC and the State Council, 1999, June 13; the State Council, 2001, May 29). For example, two important policies, *the CPCCC and State Council's Decision on Deepening Educational Reform and Bringing forth Quality Education in an All-round Way* in 1999 and the *Tenth Five-Year Plan for Education* in 2001, further relocated resources for teacher education development.

CURRENT PROVISIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

In China today, there are a variety of schools, colleges and universities preparing teachers for schools at different levels. Generally, teacher education denotes two major forms of education for the teaching profession at three levels, i.e., in the form of preservice teacher education at the levels of normal schools, professional colleges, and normal universities/colleges, and in the form of inservice teacher education at county level of teacher schools, regional level of colleges of education, and provincial level of colleges of education. Among these regular teacher education

institutions are six major regular forms, such as normal universities/colleges, normal professional colleges, normal schools, provincial colleges of education, regional colleges of education and local teacher schools.

Normal Universities/Colleges

Normal universities/colleges (*shifan daxue/xueyuan*) are the foremost form for training preservice teachers for high schools. Some of them also provide training programs for inservice high schoolteachers. Normal universities/colleges generally provide four year undergraduate programs and three year Master's programs, and many normal universities/colleges also provide three year Ph.D. programs. Undergraduate students of normal universities/colleges are recruited from senior high school graduates through the National College Entrance Examination. Undergraduate curricula include general courses (political theories, foreign language, educational studies, psychological studies, and physical education), specialized core courses (varied according to majors), and fieldwork/internship in specialized areas (varied but generally six weeks). A dissertation is required for Bachelor's degrees. Graduates from normal universities/colleges will be granted corresponding degrees after successfully finishing their program studies. Normal universities usually have larger student body, more teaching programs, stronger faculty and more financial resources than normal colleges do. It is common for each province to have at least one normal university/college. In addition, there are five national key normal universities, i.e., Beijing Normal University, East China Normal University, Northeast Normal University, Huazhong Normal University, and Shaanxi Normal University.⁴ Their

⁴ China used to adopt a key school system to give development priority to a few

students are recruited from the whole country and their graduates work all over the country.

Normal Professional Colleges

Normal professional colleges (*shifan zhuanke xuexiao*) generally provide three year education programs for preservice teachers for junior high schools. The structure of curricula is almost identical to that of normal universities/colleges, but workload of program studies are scaled down. Graduates from normal professional colleges will not be granted a degree but corresponding graduation certificates or qualifications of teaching after successfully finishing their program studies. Students are recruited from senior high school graduates through the National College Entrance Examination. Normal professional colleges are now being upgraded into teachers colleges or normal universities/colleges, or being consolidated with provincial/regional colleges of education. For example, in 2005, a normal professional college has been amalgamated into Yangtze Normal University, the case this study has selected. By 2004, students enrollment in normal universities/colleges and normal professional colleges has increased to 1.8 million from 1.35 million in 2001 (The Editorial Board of *the People's Republic of China Yearbook*, 2005, p. 752; 2002, p. 884).

universities/schools, generally located in downtowns of big cities or provincial capitals. This system guaranteed more financial resources/funds as well as better teachers and teaching facilities to so-called key schools or key universities such as national key universities/schools, provincial key universities/schools, city key schools, county key schools. Under this system, all other kinds of universities/schools are called as ordinary universities/schools. The initial purpose of this system was to provide sufficient resources to limited universities/schools for achieving higher educational excellence. As a result, the system significantly differentiated development opportunities among schools, thus disadvantaged most of universities/schools in terms of less available resources and lower social status. Recently, the Chinese government has made substantial efforts to weaken the system but the actual outcome is still unclear.

Normal Schools

Normal schools (*shifan xuexiao*) generally provide two to three year education programs for preservice teachers for elementary schools or kindergartens/nursery schoolteachers. The courses includes political theories, language studies (Chinese and foreign language), history, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, hygiene, geography, psychology, educational studies, teaching methodology, music, arts, and so on. Internship or practice of classroom teaching is required. Normal school graduates will be granted corresponding graduation certificates or qualifications of teaching after successfully finishing their program studies. Students are recruited from junior high school graduates. Normal schools used to be the major form for training elementary schoolteachers or kindergartens/nursery schoolteachers, but now they are being upgraded into normal professional colleges or being shut down, as elementary schoolteachers are required to have a college degree and some of elementary schools are being closed due to the declining of school-age student population in local area. In 2001, there were 570 normal schools enrolling a body of 0.66 million students (The Editorial Board of *the People's Republic of China Yearbook*, 2002, p. 884). By 2004, the number of normal schools has rapidly declined to 282 with 0.28 million students (The Editorial Board of *the People's Republic of China Yearbook*, 2005, p. 752).

Provincial/Regional Colleges of Education for Inservice Teachers

Provincial/regional colleges of education (*sheng/qu jiaoyu xueyuan*) are adult higher teacher education institutions that provide two to three year continual training programs for inservice teachers. Similar to normal professional colleges, the curricula

include general courses (political theories, foreign language, educational studies, psychological studies, and physical education) and specialized core courses (varied according to majors). Internship/fieldwork and dissertation are not required for graduation. Graduates will be granted corresponding certifications or qualifications of graduation after successfully finishing their program studies. Students are recruited from inservice teachers who work in elementary or secondary schools. Every province in China has set up at least one college of education, usually located in the capital of the province. Provincial/regional colleges of education are now being consolidated with normal professional colleges or being upgraded into normal universities/colleges. From 1998 throughout 2002, there were 55 colleges of education amalgamated with normal universities/colleges or other higher education institutions (Gu & Shan, 2004, p. 103). Consequently, the student body and the numbers of provincial/regional colleges of education have plummeted from 304,000 and 122 in 2001 to 194,000 and 83 in 2004, respectively (The Editorial Board of *the People's Republic of China Yearbook*, 2002, p. 884; 2005, p. 752).

County/Local Teacher schools for Inservice Teachers

County/local teacher schools (*jiaoshi jinxiu xuexiao*) are adult teacher education institutions that used to be continual training institutions in local area for inservice teachers for elementary schools, but now are being shut down or consolidated into the National Network for Teacher Education (*jiaoshi jiaoyu wangluo lianmeng*)⁵ as elementary schoolteachers are now required to have a college degree and some of elementary schools are being closed due to the declining of

⁵ This is a newly created national organization for teacher education based on the internet.

school aged student population in local area.⁶ In 2002, a total of 0.18 million students enrolled in 1,703 county/local teacher schools in China (The Editorial Board of *the People's Republic of China Yearbook*, 2003, p. 807). There are no national statistics for teacher schools in 2004, implying that most of them have been closed or consolidated.

In addition to the above six forms of teacher education, more and more comprehensive universities/colleges are actively participating in teacher education programs. For example, by 2004, 315 comprehensive universities/colleges had set up teacher education programs, enrolling a total of 0.48 million students (The Editorial Board of *the People's Republic of China Yearbook*, 2005, p. 752). In addition, as mentioned previously, the National Network of Teacher Education as well as Internet Colleges has played an important role in preparing and training teachers since their advent in recent years.

With a diverse array of teacher education institutions, as shown in Table 2.1, in 2004 more than 2.7 million students were studying in regular teacher educational systems, which included normal universities/colleges, universities/colleges with teacher education programs, provincial colleges of education, normal schools (The Editorial Board of *the People's Republic of China Yearbook*, 2005, p. 752). The number of teachers increased from 8.6 million in 1990 to 10.3 million in 2004 (see Figure 2.2a), and the quality of the teaching profession has reached a new level. For

⁶ China has adopted a strict national policy of birth control since the late 1970s. According to this national policy, one family generally only allows one child, but in some rural areas a family is allowed to have two children if the first is a girl. The penalty is extremely serious and the enforcement is also extremely rigid, if the national policy is violated. The school aged population has been declining since the late 1990s due to the national policy.

instance, the educational qualification rates of elementary, junior and senior secondary schoolteachers jumped from 93.1%, 80.5% and 60.7% in 1997, up to 97.4%, 90.4% and 72.9% in 2002, respectively (Guan, 2003). In 2004, the educational qualification rates of elementary, junior and senior secondary schoolteachers jumped to 98.3%, 93.8% and 79.6% (The Editorial Board of *the People's Republic of China Yearbook*, 2005, p. 752). As Guan (2003) has observed that the restructuring of teacher education system was positively effective, and the educational level of teacher education was significantly raised. He notes the scale of teacher education has been continuously expanded and the quality has been steadily improved, and teacher education was on its path to legalization and standardization, while its status was being elevated gradually.

But there are challenges. As shown in Figure 2.2b and Figure 2.2c, one of challenges for teacher education systems comes from the dramatic demographic change. Due to the success of the government's policy to limit one family to have one child, a policy which has been enforced since 1978, the number of new born babies has steadily gone down after population growth peaked in late 1990s. The rapidly declining number of school-age students in elementary schools shift pressures for the country's education system from quantitative increase of schools and teachers to a new focus on quality improvement for the teaching professionals. For secondary schoolteachers, quality is a major issue and quantity of teacher workforce is still in great demand, both of which pose great challenges for teacher education reform.

Table 2.1

Statistics of Teacher Education Systems in China (2004) (units of entrants, enrollments and graduates: thousand)

Types	Institutions	Total Enrollments	Entrants	Graduates
Normal Universities/Colleges	1950	1826	565	378
Universities/Colleges with teacher education programs	3150	477	148	103
Provincial Colleges of Education	830	194	115	112
Normal Schools	2820	279	83	85
Total	8750	2776	911	678

Note. Data from *People's Republic of China Yearbook 2005* (The Editorial Board of the *People's Republic of China Yearbook*, 2005, p. 752).

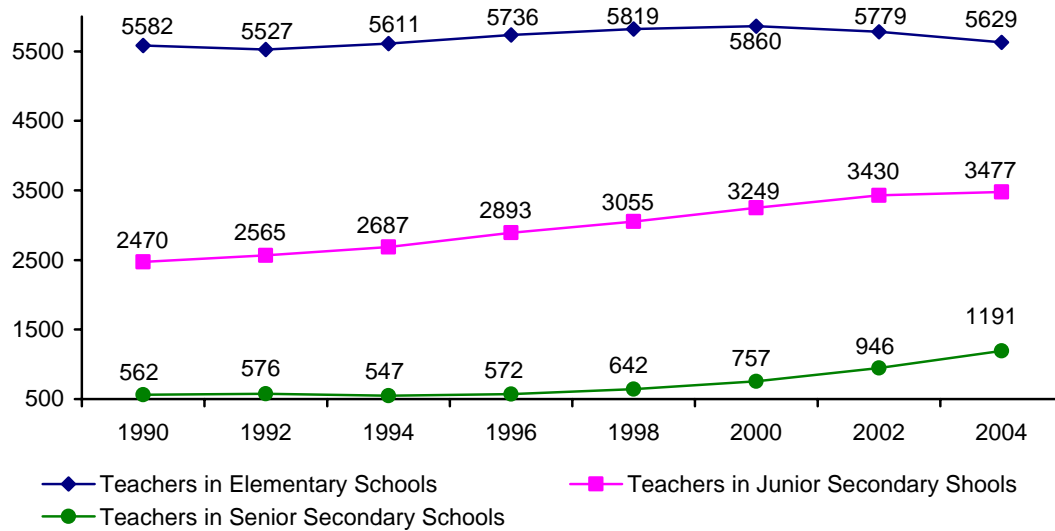


Figure 2.2a Statistical Trends of Teachers in Regular Schools in China (1990-2004) (unit: thousand). Data from *China Statistical Yearbook 2005* (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2005, p. 691).

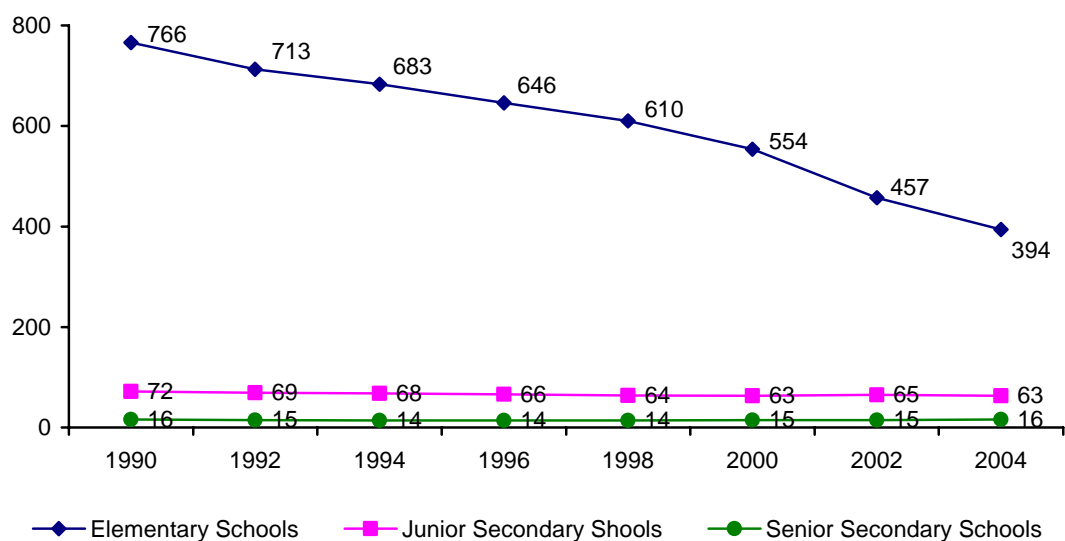


Figure 2.2b Statistical Trends of Regular Schools in China (1990-2004) (unit: thousand). Data from *China Statistical Yearbook 2005* (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2005, p. 691).

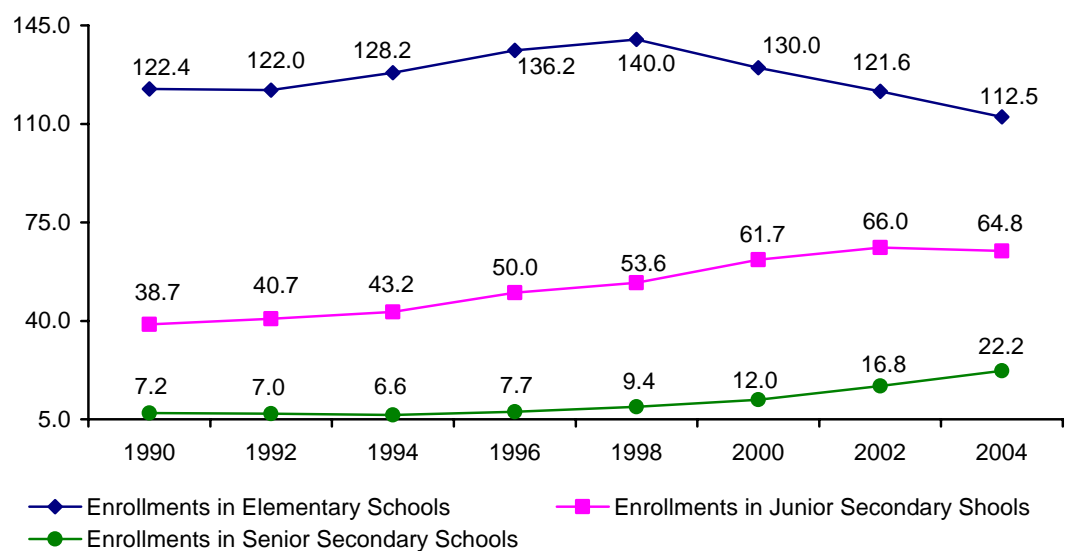


Figure 2.2c Statistical Trends of Enrollments in Regular Schools in China (1990-2004) (unit: million). Data from *China Statistical Yearbook 2005* (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2005, p. 692).

A SUMMARY OF TRENDS OF RECENT TEACHER EDUCATION REFORM

More than one decade has passed since the Chinese government launched the new round of teacher education reform. Several important trends are worthy of mention.

Firstly, the closed, independent teacher education model in China has been transformed into an open system. This transition has dual meaning to teacher education systems. On the one hand, normal universities and colleges, along with the active involvements of comprehensive higher education institutions, have become the main channels for teacher training and preparation (the State Council, 2001, May 29). Graduate schools/colleges of education in comprehensive universities such as Beijing University and Zhejiang University have already established themselves to compete in the “market.” More and more comprehensive universities/colleges are providing programs for teachers. On the other hand, the two once exclusive subsystems of teacher education, i.e., preservice teacher education and inservice teacher education, are now being integrated with each other. Provincial/regional colleges of education, formerly responsible for in-service training, are gradually being combined into normal universities/colleges. Normal universities/colleges began offering programs for inservice teacher education. Additionally, the National Network for Teacher Education and Internet Colleges have provided numerous opportunities for the integration process.

Secondly, the traditional three levels of teacher education are being upgraded to

a new system with three levels. Traditionally, elementary, junior and senior secondary schoolteachers were trained in normal schools, two-three year normal professional colleges, and four year normal universities/colleges, respectively. As required by the professionalization of teacher workforce, this traditional model is no longer able to meet the new demand of teacher professionalization. For example, the Ministry of Education required that elementary schoolteachers must receive higher qualifications of teacher education from the two-three year normal professional colleges and all teachers in high schools must hold Bachelor's degrees (The MOE, 2002, February 6). Under the new requirements for the teaching profession, normal schools for preparing elementary schoolteachers are generally being shut down or amalgamated with other schools nationwide. For some secondary schoolteachers, graduate studies in normal universities/colleges are mandatory (The MOE, 2002, February 6).

Thirdly, new programs and degree of teacher education have been established to expand teacher education with higher quality. The Educational Master Degree in Subject Teaching (Ed.M.), different from academically oriented Master Degree of Education, has been established since 1996 for elementary and secondary schoolteachers. The new educational master degree is an occupational or professional degree, like MBA or MPA, for those who have been working in the teaching professional. There are 41 normal/comprehensive universities offering Ed.M. programs for inservice teachers. Students recruited in Ed.M. programs have jumped from 1,490 in 1998 up to 6,970 in 2003, and more than 20,000 Ed.M. students were enrolled in normal/comprehensive universities in 2003 (Feng, 2003, September 24).

Fourthly, new licensing system for the teacher profession is fully operating with

standardized procedures, legislative requirements and measurements, and wide participation. Further policy actions will focus on establishing an accreditation system for teacher education institutions and an evaluation system for supervising their quality (The MOE, 2002, February 6).

Lastly, teacher education systems have adopted new forms, thanks to the development of information technologies, to provide and expand training services, especially for teachers and schools in rural areas. For example, China has built up an alternative form for teacher education, i.e., the National Network for Teacher Education on September 8th, 2003 (Shi, 2003, September 9). The National Network for Teacher Education is an internet-based nationwide distance education project cooperated by normal universities/colleges for training both preservice and inservice teachers. In addition, Internet Colleges have been opened by normal universities since 2001. Currently, there are 67 internet colleges providing thousands of courses for a total enrollment of 1.08 million students all over the country (The MOE, 2003).

ANALYSIS OF MAJOR POLICY DOCUMENTS

Overview of the Major Policy Documents

Since the early 1990s, Chinese central government has issued a series of policy documents to address the reform of teacher education. The following is a brief chronicled list of major relevant documents from 1990 throughout 2004.

1. *The Guidelines for the Reform and Development of Education in China* by the CPCCC & the State Council, February 13, 1993.
2. *The Law of Teachers of the People's Republic of China* by the Standing

Commission of National People's Congress, October 31, 1993.

3. *The Ordinance of Teacher Qualification* by the State Council, December 12, 1995.
4. *The Ninth Five-Year Plan for China's Educational Development and the Development Outline by 2010* by the State Commission of Education, April 10, 1996.
5. *The Opinion on the Reform and Development of Teacher Education* by the State Commission of Education, December 5, 1996.
6. *The Action Plan for Educational Revitalization Facing the 21st Century* by the Ministry of Education, December 24, 1998.
7. *The Opinion on Adjusting the Structure of Teacher Education Institutions* by the Ministry of Education, March 16, 1999.
8. *The CPMCC and State Council's Decision on the Deepening of Educational Reform and the Full Promotion of Quality Education* by the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the State Council, June 13, 1999.
9. *The Decision on the Reform and Development of Basic Education* by the State Council, May 29, 2001.
10. *The Guidelines for Basic Education Curriculum Reform* by the Ministry of Education, June 7, 2001.
11. *The Tenth Five-year National Plan for Education* by the Ministry of Education, July 2001.
12. *The Opinion on the Reform and Development of Teacher Education during the Tenth Five-year National Plan* by the Ministry of Education, February 6, 2002.
13. *The Rejuvenation Action Plan for Education 2003-2007* by the Ministry of Education, February 10, 2004.

Central to these policy mandates is to improve the overall quality of basic education through taking a variety of policy actions. These policy actions included the professionalization of the teaching workforce step by step, and the reform of higher teacher education institutions. For example, *the Ordinance of Teacher Qualification* in 1995, for the first time after 1949, began to ensure the quality of teaching workforce with a licensing system. The licensing system requires that “teachers in schools at all levels or in other educational institutions must obtain required teaching license correspondingly” (The State Council, 1995, December 12). Based on this

national regulation, seven licenses have been established for certifying teachers in kindergartens, elementary schools, junior and senior high schools, special schools and technology schools, and higher education institutions.

Together with the new requirements for the teaching profession, the reform of higher teacher education system was viewed by the Chinese policymakers as key to achieving high quality in basic education. The above thirteen government policy documents claimed the rationale, policy problems, major policy goal and guidelines for the nationwide teacher education reform since the 1990s. Among these thirteen policy documents, *the Opinion on Adjusting the Structure of Teacher Education Institutions* and *the Opinion on the Reform and Development of Teacher Education during the Tenth Five-year National Plan* by the Ministry of Education are the most relevant policy documents which guided the reform of higher teacher education institutions. These documents prescribed major tasks and strategies to achieve the proposed goals of the teacher education reform.

The Rationale for Teacher Education Reform

Behind the above policy documents, there are theories that support their policy formation. Among them, the modernization theory and the human capital theory are the two most influential theories for teacher education reform. The modernization theory, mainly originated from two crucial theories—evolutionary theories and functionalist theory (So, 1990, pp. 19-23), is an interdisciplinary exploration of explaining development. Alex Inkeles and his followers argued that “to modernize is to develop, and that a society cannot hope to develop until the majority of its population holds modern values” (as cited in Fagerlind & Saha, 1989, p. 16). As a

psychologist attempting to explain economic growth, David McClelland argued that the “need for achievement” or “achievement motivation” is behind the drive for the economic growth at national and personal levels. Since the late 1970s, the Chinese government has tried hard to pursue a path to modernization at all levels and all aspects of the country,⁷ and has shown a strong national achievement motivation to catch up with the U.S., Japan, UK, France and alike. Their efforts have resulted in rapid economic and social development, including universalizing compulsory education, expansion of higher education, reorganizing educational structure, improving the overall quality of education, and reforming teacher education systems, etc.

The Chinese leaders also have strong beliefs in the human capital theory. The human capital theorists look at schooling as capital in the sense of raising earnings, and assume that “education and training are the most important investments in human capital” (Becker, 1993, p. 17). Based on these assumptions, human capital theorists advocate that education is powerful and thus plays a pivotal role in helping the poor and developing countries. Since 1980 when Theodore W. Schultz first visited China, human capital theory has gained a high reputation among scholars and policymakers in China. *A Theme Report of China’s Education and Human Capital Resource Development: Stride from a Country of Tremendous Population to a Country of Profound Human Resources* with 714 pages, lays out rich data and strongly argues

⁷ The Chinese leaders have been pursuing the modernization goal as a national policy for over two and a half decades. Initially suggested by Chairman Mao Zedong, the Four Modernizations, i.e., Modernization of Agriculture, Industry, National Defense, and Science and Technology, were first officially introduced by Premier Zhou Enlai in *the Government Work Report* at the Third National People's Congress in 1964, but it was until the late 1970s that the national policy was fully under its way led by Deng Xiaoping to accelerate the China’s modernization process (please refer to: Hsu, I. C. Y., 2000, pp. 803-816).

that “human capital promotes economic growth and societal development through multiple ways”, and that “after education is developed, human capital is then developed, so is economy, and eventually national power” (The Project Team, 2003, p. 13; p. 31). Since education contributes to a nation’s economic productivity and growth, and teachers are responsible for transforming general laborers into specialists and knowledge workers (Zhang, 1995, p. 149), the human capital theory becomes one of the major theories on which teacher education policy is based.

The Chinese policymakers eagerly embraced the modernization theory and the human capital theory, and practically applied them as the rationale for teacher education reform. As Ashmore and Cao have unveiled, the Chinese policymakers believed “that education is the best hope for revitalizing the Chinese nation and that the hope for revitalizing education abides in the teachers” (1997, p. 70). For example, the CPCCC and the State Council clearly stated that “education is the foundation of socialist modernization construction.... education is the hope for rejuvenating our nation, and the hope for rejuvenating education is teachers” (1993, February 13). In 1996, the State Commission of Education elaborated the rationale for teacher education reform as the following:

Making teacher education a success and training a highly qualified teaching profession shall have profound impact on the development of schooling, the quality improvement of the whole Chinese people as a nation, the implementation of the strategy of national rejuvenation through science and education and that of sustainable development, and propelling economic development and promoting all-round social progress. (The SCE, 1996, December 5)

In the subsequent years, the Chinese government repeatedly urged that high quality education is the foundation of socialist modernization construction and a

highly qualified teacher workforce is the key to promoting quality education (The CPCCC & the State Council, 1999, June 13; The State Council, 2001, May 29). The rationale for teacher education reform is theorized by the Chinese policymakers as the following equation:

$$TE \rightarrow TQ \rightarrow QS/SA \rightarrow WQ \rightarrow MD/EG \rightarrow NA^8$$

By this simplified equation, the Chinese leaders assumed that a better system for teacher education prepares better teachers, better prepared teachers improve the quality of schooling and student achievement, higher educational quality and better student achievement bring about higher quality of labor force, higher quality of labor force tremendously benefits the country's modernization development and economic growth, leading finally to achievement of China's national goals of modernization and prosperity. Based on these assumptions, teacher education, especially higher teacher education, becomes the first and foremost target of the reform.

Policy Problems

The diagnosis of substantial problems is often the first step for policy action and problem identification is "crucial in setting agenda" (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 280). In each policy document listed above, policy problems are usually identified first to introduce policy actions. In 1999, *the Opinion on Adjusting the Structure of Teacher Education Institutions* concluded that the development of the country's teacher education could not cope with the modernization construction and the demand

⁸ TE: Teacher Education; TQ: Teacher Quality; QS/SA: Quality of Schooling/Student Achievement; WQ: Workforce Quality; MD/EG: Modernization Development/Economic Growth; NA: National Achievement.

of “Three Orientations of Education,”⁹ and especially problematic was that the development and reform of teacher education did not help provide quality education for the socioeconomic development (The Ministry of Education, 1999, March 16). For example, the general supply provided by the teacher education system was insufficient, its structure and allocation were not optimal and efficient, its quality was not reasonable, its theories, curriculum, teaching methods failed to meet the needs of quality education. Meanwhile, normal schools were over expanded and the continuous education of schoolteachers was in short supply (The Ministry of Education, 1999, March 16). The document concluded that the quality and efficiency of teacher education must be addressed by the reform.

In 2002, in its continuous effort to identify problems in teacher education, the Ministry of Education stated the following:

1. The policy of “giving priority to teacher education development” is not being fully carried out, financial support and investment are still not sufficient, and the conditions of normal universities/colleges are comparatively unsatisfactory which hampers the development of teacher education;
2. The distribution, structure, mechanism and openness of teacher education are not reasonable, further reinforcement of the institutional construction of teacher education is needed;
3. The concepts, curricula and teaching contents, and teaching methods of teacher education do not meet the demands of educational modernization and quality education; and
4. Teachers’ educational qualifications and teacher professionalization are generally low. (the MOE, 2002, February 6)

These stated problems in teacher education have been highlighted by Chinese

⁹ That *education should be geared toward modernization, toward the world and toward the future* (Deng, 1983, October 1) was originally proposed by Deng Xiaoping when he visited Beijing Jingshan School. The message was later abbreviated as *the Three Orientations of Education* which has been ever since served as a most important policy guideline for China’s education reform.

educational leaders, who based their analysis on data analysis and demographic trend. For example, they forecast that just in the senior high education level, there will be a shortage of 1.2 million teachers (The Project Team, 2003, p. 318). From the Ministry of Education's 2002 report, major problems in teacher education are associated with higher teacher education institutions. In other words, the status quo of higher teacher education institutions must be changed.

Policy Goal and Guidelines

Based on the recognition on teachers' roles and the rationale for teacher education reform, the Chinese policymakers set the major policy goal for the reform as "building up a highly qualified teacher workforce" (The MOE, 2002, February 6).

Early in 1993, Article Three of *the Law of Teachers* states that "teachers are specialized personnel who fulfill the functions of education and teaching" (The SCNPC, 1993, October 31). Article Four of the law further lays out the fundamental responsibilities of governments as the following for the promotion of the teaching profession and teacher education:

People's governments at all levels should adopt measures to strengthen the ideological-political education and professional training of teachers, to improve the working and living conditions of teachers, to ensure the legitimate rights and interests of teachers, and to raise the social status of teachers. All of society should respect teachers. (The SCNPC, 1993, October 31)

At the same time, the CPCCC and the State Council articulated the following guiding principles for teacher education reform:

Education is the hope for rejuvenating our nation, and the hope for rejuvenating education is teachers. The fundamental guiding principle for educational reform and development is to build up a stable teacher workforce with an optimized structure and a better-off political and professional quality. [We] must be firmly committed to adopting key policies and strategies to promote the social status

of teachers, to significantly improve their working, studying and living conditions, and to make them the most respectable profession. (The CPCCC & the State Council, 1993, February 13)

The goals and guidelines for teacher education reform stated in the CPCCC and the State Council's jointly issued document have been reiterated again and again in the ensuing years by the Chinese governments, nationally and locally (the CPCCC & the State Council, 1999, June 13; the MOE, 1999, March 16; the MOE, 2001, July; the MOE, 2002, February 6, 2002; the MOE, 2004, February 10; the SCE, 1996, April 10; 1996, December 5; the State Council, 2001, May 29). In February 2002, the Ministry of Education specified a series of guidelines for teacher education reform and development during the period of the tenth-five year national plan (2001-2005). Particularly, the guidelines called for ongoing, structural adjustment for teacher education institutions, and urged actions to be taken to strengthen normal universities/colleges for teacher education. It also required higher teacher education institutions to actively speed up IT applications for teacher education (The MOE, 2002, February 6).

The core of the goals and guidelines for teacher education reform is the promotion of teacher quality to meet the demand of education under radical social changes. These policy goal and guidelines set steadfast directions for the reform of teacher education institutions.

Tasks and Strategies

For fulfilling the above policy goal and guidelines, a number of tasks and their corresponding strategies have been pinpointed and updated from time to time. In 1993, the CPCCC and State Council's *Guidelines for China's Education Reform and*

Development addressed the promotion of the social status of the teaching profession as a major task to enhance teacher education (the CPCCC & the State Council, 1993, February 13). This call was made against the background that China's radical transition from a centrally planned economy to a market-oriented economy has remarkably proletarianized the teaching profession since the late 1980s.

In the mid-1990s, China's teacher education systems were under heavy pressure due to a high teacher demand when overall enrollments in elementary, junior and senior high schools sharply soared (see Figure 3.2c). The then State Commission of Education stipulated the following major task for teacher education reform to increase the output of teachers:

[We must] overall carry out [socialist] educational guidelines, adhere to the direction of socialist schooling, focus on teaching reform, thoroughly speed up every reform of teacher education...to *satisfy the demand of teachers with sufficient quantity and reasonable quality* [italics added], build a socialist teacher education system embodied with lifelong learning and featured with Chinese characteristics, and gradually accomplish the modernization of teacher education. (The SCE, 1996, December 5)

In 1996, The SCE's *Opinion on the Reform and Development of Teacher*

Education for the first time set one of its tasks as to improving the teacher quality through reform in teacher education institutions: "Teacher education institutions at all levels are required to plan for the construction of teacher workforce, to gradually set up regular training system for teachers advancement, to well-echelon teacher teams, and to improve their abilities of teaching and research" (The SCE, 1996, December 5). In 1999, the Ministry of Education realized that the size of normal universities/colleges was too small whereas that of normal schools was too large, because the peak wave of student population in elementary school was over in the late

1990s and all entrants in the teaching profession would be required by 2010 to graduate at least from a normal professional college. The Chinese policymakers therefore decided the major task for teacher education reform was adjusting the system structure for teacher education institutions, targeting at largely increasing the size of normal universities/colleges but significantly reducing that of normal schools by the early 2000s (The MOE, 1999, March 16).

In 2002, the Ministry of Education released *the Opinion on the Reform and Development of Teacher Education during the Tenth Five-year National Plan* (The MOE, 2002, February 6). This guiding document concluded that during the period of the tenth five-year plan new challenges for teacher education are quality control, system reconstruction as well as setting policy priority for teacher education reform. The three major tasks for teacher education reform and development are stated as the following:

1. Generally complete the structure adjustment for teacher education and further improve teacher education systems. ...Set up an appropriate size and structure for teacher education institutions, build an open teacher education system counted primarily on teacher education institutions, participated by other higher education institutions, integrate preservice and inservice training and promote lifelong learning.
2. Create a new situation in training teachers and improve the educational qualifications for new teachers....Gradually transform into a teacher education system with three levels, i.e., professional college education, undergraduate education and graduate education.
3. Deepen teaching reform and improve teaching quality. Teacher education institutions must update their educational theories, redouble their efforts toward the structure adjustment of programs, continuously enforce the reform on training models and curricular systems, improve training quality (The MOE, 2002, February 6).

To ensure the tasks for teacher education reform were accomplished, the Ministry of Education (2002, February 6) sketched several strategies such as

adjusting the structure of teacher education and efficiently reorganizing its resources, setting up new standards and requirements for teacher education, updating teaching contents and methods, enlarging student enrolment in the Educational Master's Degree in Subject Teaching (Ed.M) studies, working on teacher training for the New Curriculum System for Basic Education,¹⁰ reinforcing efforts on the expansion of IT applications for teacher education, constructing a highly qualified teacher corps for teacher education, and enhancing the licensing system for teacher qualification.

Based on these tasks and strategies, higher teacher education institutions were urged to enhance the teaching quality of teacher education courses, to set up the new Ed.M. for inservice teachers and principals, to update the teaching content and methods of teacher education courses, to strengthen the distinguishing feature of teacher education, and to optimize the resources available for teacher education.

In sum, the multiple tasks and strategies outlined by the Chinese policymakers in different period have greatly shaped the reform on the country's teacher education system. The ultimate goal and tasks of the policy action are obvious: To reconstruct and optimize teacher education systems to allow for diversity; and to produce a highly qualified teacher workforce and to professionalize the teaching force by setting high standards and regulations.

Although Lin and Xun concluded that "the recent 20 years are the best time for China's teacher education, during which a rapid development with fruitful outcomes has been enhanced" (2001, p. 5), there remain great challenges for the long-standing reform. For example, the policy of "giving priority to teacher education development"

¹⁰ See details in the next section of this chapter.

has not been fully implemented, financial support and investment are still in great shortage, and the facilities of teacher education institutions are inadequate as compared to other non-teacher education institutions. Also, the theories, curricula and teaching methods in teacher education do not meet the needs for the promotion of quality education, and teachers' educational qualifications and teacher professionalization are generally low (The MOE, 2002, February 6). Furthermore, teacher shortages in certain areas continue to exert serious pressure for teacher education (Chang & Paine, 1992, pp. 84-88; Paine, 1992, pp. 184-187).

THE INTERSECTION OF OTHER NATIONAL POLICIES MADE SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE TEACHER EDUCATION REFORM

The 1990s is a rare period in which the Chinese policymakers made many important national policies simultaneously for education reform. Apart from the national policy of teacher education, the Chinese government has at the same time launched the Higher Education Expansion Initiative in the mid-1990s and the New Curriculum Reform for Basic Education in 1999.

The Higher Education Expansion Initiative

China has at present become a country with “the largest national higher education system in the world” (The UNESCO, 2003, June 23-25, p. 8). From the early 1990s, China has begun the expansion of its higher education system. As shown in Table 2.2 and Figure 3.3, the total enrollment of students in higher education institutions has jumped from 3.6 million in 1991 to 20.0 million in 2004, and the gross enrollment rate increased from 3.6 percent in 1991 to 19.0 percent in 2004 (The

MOE, 2005, April). The astonishing expansion of higher education in China especially after 1999 has been brought about by the implementation of the national policy of expanding higher education (Tan, 1999, p. 1049).

Table 2.2

Gross Enrollment Rates of China's Tertiary Education (1992-2004)

Year	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004
Gross Enrollment Rate (%)	3.9	6.0	8.3	9.8	11.5	15.0	19.0

Note. Data from *The National Statistical Communiqué of Educational Development* (MOE, 2003, February 27; The MOE, 2005, April).

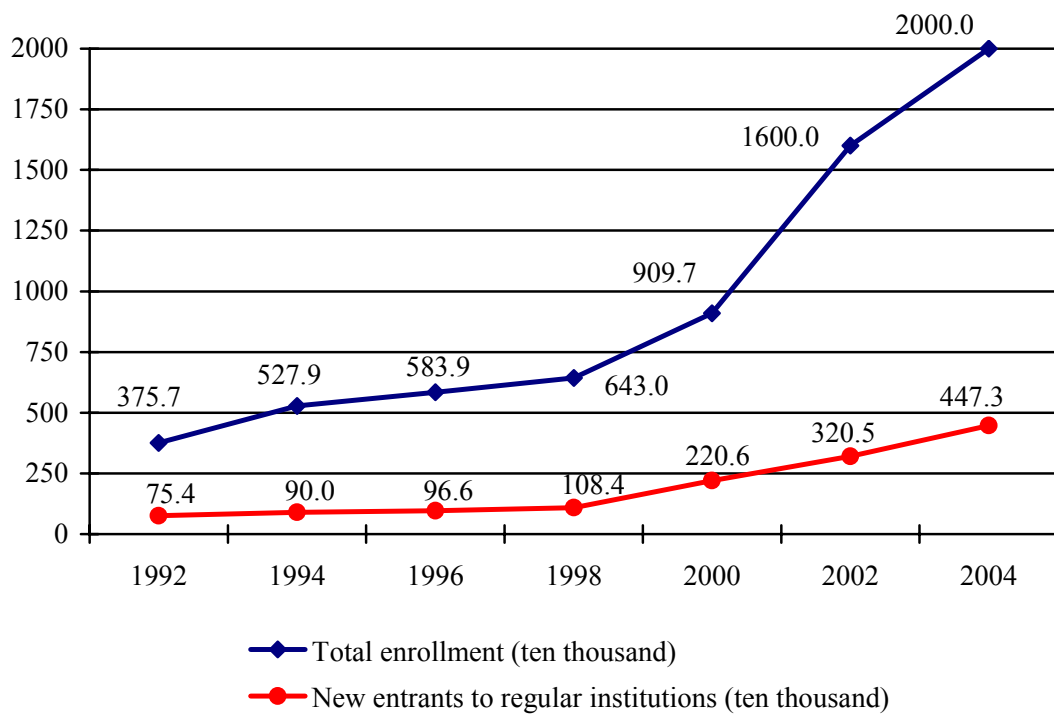


Figure 2.3 *Trends of Enrollments of China's Tertiary Education from 1992 through 2004*. Data are from the National Bureau of Statistics of China (1992-2005), *The National Statistical Communiqué of Educational Development* (MOE, 2003, February 27; The MOE, 2005, April).

The radical expansion of higher education has brought significant changes and challenges to higher teacher education institutions. For example, it propelled teacher education universities to focus on the unprecedented expansion in enrollment within a few short years, thereby exacting a high pressure on faculty's teaching due to the rapid increase of student population. In the expansion process, restructuring and formation of new programs and departments took place, thus higher education expansion also brought new opportunities for teacher education programs to be upgraded and expanded.

The New Curriculum Reform for Basic Education

On June 13th, 1999, the CPCCC and the State Council jointly promulgated the Decision on the Deepening of Educational Reform and the Full Promotion of Quality Education. In this document, the New Curriculum System for Basic Education was introduced nationwide to completely replace the old curriculum system that has long been criticized as having “overemphasized on learning of discipline knowledge and being isolated from the needs of the times, social development and students’ individuality” (The CPCCC & the State Council, 1999, June 13). The New Basic Education Curriculum System consists of the national curricula, local curricula and school curricula. It focuses on new learning contents, teaching methods and technology, and aims to optimize curricular structures. Comprehensive knowledge courses will be enhanced for elementary school students, while subjects learning and comprehensive knowledge courses will be combined in junior high schools, and subjects will be strengthened in senior high schools. In addition, students will be exposed more to learning experiences allowing for individual creativity and group

cooperation, and will have more opportunities to involve in IT applications, foreign language studies, social activities and voluntary public services (The State Council, 2001, May 29; The MOE, 2001, June 7). The New Curriculum System for Basic Education is viewed by the Chinese policymakers as the core of current education reform and a key to promoting school excellence. As a result, it has speeded up the national reform in teacher education system, for it requires teachers, including prospective teachers and inservice teachers, to broadly upgrade their skills and knowledge. It has also challenged the national policy of teacher education reform in terms of setting higher standards and requirements for teachers produced currently by teacher education institutions.

These national policies of educational reform sometimes supported or collaborated with each other, but sometimes counteracted or backfired on each other. In the latter's case, the radical expansion of higher education has profoundly impacted on the national policy of teacher education which will be studied in later chapters.

STUDIES OF CHINA'S TEACHER EDUCATION REFORM

Teacher education reform as a "global issue", coined by Shimahara (1995), has generated a vast literature cross-nationally that involves extensive research including policy analysis (Chen, Zhu, Hu, Guo & Sun, 2002; Cheng, Chow & Tsui, 2001; Cooke, 2000; Deng, 2002; Department of Teacher Education of Ministry of Education, 2001; Dooley, 2001; Finkelstein & Efthimiou, 2000; Gideonse, 1992; Gu, 2003; Gu & Shan, 2004; Guo, 1999; Guan, 2001, 2003; Hawkins, 1992; Hayhoe, 1998, 2001, 2002; Kaplan & Edelfelt, 1996; Leung & Xu, 2000; Li, 1999; Lin & Xun, 2001; Liu

& Xie, 2002; Long & Riegle, 2002; McBride, 1996; Paine, 1992, 1995; Pepper, 1996; Sato & Asanuma, 2000; Shen, 1994; Surgue & Day, 2002; The DTE of MOE, 2001; Wang, 1997; Zeichner, Melnick & Gomez, 1996). Of the various studies regarding China's teacher education reform, four research themes can be identified. Those are historical reviews and studies; policy analyses; future projections and practical reflections; and international and comparative studies.

Historical Reviews

The neglect of the history of Chinese teacher education was brought to an end with the publication of *Zhongguo Shifan Jiaoyu Jianshi* (*A brief history of China's teacher education*), edited by Liu Wenxiu in 1984. This pioneering study divides the establishment and development of Chinese teacher education into five historical stages, and concludes that teacher education is the key for the development of the national education system (Liu, 1984, p. 175). Liu's influential narrations of the history of modern Chinese teacher education have paved the way for the field's development, though his research is limited to the period before 1949.

At the centennial commemoration of the establishment of China's modern teacher education system, Wang Bingzhao, an influential figure in the field of history of Chinese education, briefly reviewed the historical development of the modern teacher education in China, including its history after 1949. Wang (1997) believes that the two contradictory traditions of Chinese culture, i.e., respecting teachers which originated from Confucianism, and non-professionalization of teachers, have an offsetting impact on teachers' social position. After uncovering the two development stages of the modern teacher education system, Wang (1997) concludes that policy

attention must be given to the following four spaces: The varied needs of elevating educational qualifications for dissimilar teachers in diverse areas; the narrowed goals of teacher education exclusively for schools; the balance of teaching-oriented and academic-oriented practices; and combination of preservice and inservice education (p. 9).

In addition to the historical reviews presented by Liu (1984) and Wang (1997), recent scholarship has reflected on the practices of teacher education in China. Liu and Xie (2002) highlight the continual national debates over the decades on the relationship between teaching-oriented model and academic-oriented model in teacher education. “Teaching-oriented” model means that normal universities/colleges prioritize educational/psychological teaching (professional development) for teacher students, but might minimize other academic curricula that are highly emphasized by comprehensive universities. On the contrary, the “academic-oriented” model sets the same standards for academic curricula as those offered by comprehensive universities, but the roles and the identity of teacher education institutions may be downplayed or neglected. Liu and Xie (2002) document that, while some theorists argue that teacher education must be based on a teaching-oriented model, others contend that it should focus on an academic-oriented model, and still others insist on finding a balance of both at some point (p. 185). These debates are in fact closely related to other continual debates on the different systems of teacher education, such as should we have an independent, closed system, or an open system of teacher education?

Policy Analyses

Researchers and policy analysts show a strong interest in the scenarios of

China's teacher education reform. Paine (1991) observes that China has introduced technical strategies to strengthen its teacher education system to attract better teacher students, to enhance the curriculum and teaching, and to establish high standards (pp. 227-234). Paine (1995) discusses the challenge for Chinese teacher education by looking into two competing discourses, i.e., "modernizing" and "nationalizing" perspectives. The "modernizing" view typically links teachers' needs and teacher education reform to economic and technological development or modernization, while the "nationalizing" view stresses teachers' moral role and the social obligations of teacher education (pp. 84-92). Paine (1995) argues that the conflicting views share an initial premise about the importance of teacher education and its need for reform, but differ from each other in their interpretations of the system's problems and their corresponding solutions (p. 89).

Following Paine's accounts, Shen (2001) focuses on the teacher education reform in China under the national modernization drive and marketization, and discusses how the teacher education curriculum is changing in response to the daunting challenges established by the national goals. Li (1999) studies the recent reform in teacher education in China by looking into four primary measures, i.e., the establishment of a nationwide network of teacher preparation and professional development; the launching of a nationwide upgrading and improvement of the qualifications of in-service teachers; the building up of nationwide respect for teachers; and the improvement of the treatment of teachers (salaries, living and working conditions) (pp. 181-183).

Similar to Shen (2001) and Li (1999), Lin and Xun (2001) document the

developmental course of the Chinese teacher education system by looking into the changes in teacher education amid China's economic reform. They outline new trends in teacher education development, such as that the training of senior high school teachers will take place in an open system rather than in a close system; that newly trained elementary school teachers will have an elevated academic qualification, and that there will be less independently established teacher education institutions (pp. 21-22). Meanwhile, Ashmore and Cao (1997) acknowledge that the large number of unqualified teachers and normal schools create obstacles for the teacher education reform (pp. 75-77).

There are a number of other policy analyses that address China's reform of teacher education at local level. Although the teacher education system has been largely restored in the 1980s from the chaos of the Great Culture Revolution, Ma (2000), taking the case of teacher education system in Shanghai, points out that several major problems greatly hamper the development of the teacher education system. For example, current teacher education institutions are administered with little consideration by various governmental offices at different levels, and limited resources for teacher education are not efficiently allocated and utilized (Ma, 2000, pp. 101-102).

Future Projections and Practical Reflections

Apart from historical reviews and policy analysis, future projections and practical reflections have been carried out on teacher education reform (Fen, 2001; Gu, 2003; Han, 2003; Lian, 2003; Lin, 2003; Liu, 2002; Ye, 2003; Zhang & Xue, 2002; Zhong, 2003; Zhong, 2001; Zhu, 2001b). The project team of East China

Normal University (2001) envisages that a dynamic teacher education system with high quality as: a dynamic teacher education system is an open teacher education system providing high quality teacher education, that normal universities/colleges would become the major providers of teacher education; and the new system must be based on the professionalization of teacher workforce (pp. 2-3). In 2003, MOE held the National Meeting on Teacher Education Reform and Development. The Meeting advocated a new teacher education system which is led by prestigious universities, carried out by teacher education institutions, participated in by non-teacher education institutions, and complemented with qualification and non-qualification training (Liu & Xu, 2003, p. 5). These future projections have been hotly discussed by policymakers as well as researchers.

Some researchers are not satisfied with the above future projections for teacher education. Instead, they reflect on their own experiments for teacher development and point to new directions in the efforts of teacher education reform. For instance, “teachers as reflective researchers” has been viewed by them as an alternative to enhance the teacher workforce. “Teachers as reflective researchers” is generally accepted as a “systematic and intentional inquiry carried out by teachers in their own schools and classrooms” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, p. 7; Lytle & Cochran-Smith, 1994, p. 24), and teacher researchers are able to “revolutionize professional practice by viewing themselves as potentially the most sophisticated research instrument available” (Kincheloe, 2003, p. 52). From this point view, Ye (2000) spells out that a new type of teacher can be nurtured through the practice of school reform (p. 58). In her experiment on combining teaching with research for the New Curriculum Reform

for Basic Education, Ye (2000) concludes that the combination of theoretical research and practical researches in school reform benefits the professional development of the new type of teachers in many ways (pp. 60-62). For example, theoretical research paves the way for broadening teachers' knowledge and perspectives; it provides teachers with basic principles and guidelines for day-to-day practices; and the combination of theoretical researches and teaching helps teachers to change their performance. Ye (1997) observes,, however, that the strategic priority of teacher education reform is still distant from the reality of policy actions (p. 8).

International and Comparative Studies

International and comparative studies provide China's teacher education reforms with alternative views. Hayhoe (2002) distinguishes four models of teacher education through a comparative historical analysis of three Western and three Asian societies:

- Model A: Normal colleges absorbed into major comprehensive universities as faculties of education (United States, England, Japan).
- Model B: Normal colleges upgraded to become universities of education, or local comprehensive universities in which faculties of education play a leading role and shape the ethos (Japan, England, United States).
- Model C: Normal colleges merged into independent university level institutes that cooperate with universities in the training of teachers for primary and secondary schools, but have their own separate legal existence (France).
- Model D: Normal colleges upgraded to or integrated within normal universities that retain a strong profile as single purpose universities focused on the teaching profession (China/Taiwan). (pp. 16-17)

By comparing the four teacher education models, Hayhoe questions the Chinese model of teacher education, for it views "the school sector as separate and distinct from society as a whole, and gives little attention to how its fields of

knowledge or professional areas of study might relate to the wider needs of a learning society” (p. 20). Hayhoe’s critique is supported by other studies. Dooley (2001) offers a case study conducted in Shanghai, showing vividly how “obedient students” are mechanically trained by teachers who received professional education from independent, closed and narrowly specified teacher education institutions. As a result, four problems of Chinese teacher education are identified by Leung and Xu (2000). These problems are the identity crisis, the mismatch between teacher supply and demand, the incongruence between teacher preparation and classroom realities, and the poor appeal of teaching as a career.

Teacher education models in other countries could provide China with valuable experiences. Chinese scholars have actively examined the transformation of teacher education models in major developed nations such as the U.K., U.S., Australia, and Singapore. Zhu (2001a) introduces to Chinese scholars the U.S. model of Professional Development School (PDS) and the British model of School-Based Education (SBE). Meanwhile, Zhu studies theoretical background for those models, such as the discourse on teachers as professional learners, teachers as reflective researchers, and teachers as transformative intellectuals (2001a, pp. 55-57). Researchers also extend their attention to the Japanese teacher education system. Based on his comparison of Chinese teacher education with its counterpart in Japan, Xie (1995) articulates that the reform of teacher education system in China cannot simply follow Japan which adopted an open model after the World War Two, because China currently faces a drastically different situation (p. 22). Xie hints that the transformation of China’s teacher education system should follow a gradual, transitional path from the

independently closed system to an open one.

The Shortage of Implementation Studies on China's Teacher Education Reform

The literature presented above helps provide valuable information about the background and issues of teacher education reform in China. For example, the historical reviews and studies provide background information for the reform. The persisting national debates on maintaining a teaching-oriented or adopting an academic-oriented system highlight dilemmas scholars and policymakers face when examining China's teacher education reform.

Literature about the *implementation* of teacher education reform in China, however, is extremely limited. First, there are few, if any, policy analyses on the implementation of teacher education reform in China. There have been sporadic theoretical debates or general discussions on how to implement the policy of teacher education reform, but none of them provide an empirical or interpretive account as to how the policy of teacher education reform has actually been implemented. This is particularly true in examining how teacher education institutions have respond to the national policies of teacher education reform. Zhong Binglin, President of Beijing Normal University, proposed several strategies for implementing the national policy of teacher education reform at institutional level. He called for leaders and faculty to change their perspectives, and policy implementors to plan scientifically, implementing the national policy with bravery, and paying attention to foreign successful experiences (Zhong, 2003, pp. 26-27). However, he did not provide any detailed narration about how the policy has actually been put into practice and how the policy has brought about changes in his institution.

Secondly, many Chinese policy analysts lack training in the field of policy analysis, especially in the study of policy implementation. The policy analyses presented by them neither have been rigorously designed with appropriate analytic theories or frameworks, nor are they conducted using a carefully selected research methodology. Applications of various policy analysis approaches, such as those exemplified in the pioneering research about the Oakland Project of social development by Pressman and Wildavsky (1973), the Cuban missile crisis by Allison (1971), or the U.S. federal health and transportation policymaking by Kingdon (1984), are especially missing in policy studies in China. In other words, very few studies of China's teacher education reform are qualified as "authentic" policy analyses, for very limited studies applied any analytic frameworks for implementation studies, as Pressman and Wildavsky similarly observed in the U.S. in the 1970s (1973, p. 166). Most of these studies are based on personal visualizations, sweeping generalizations, and abstract theorizations without being supported by research-based evidences. Some of them are merely policy reviews or personal comments on the national reform. Worse still, there is largely an unawareness of the need for policy study of the teacher education reform in the Chinese scholarly community.

Finally, the community of Chinese policy analysts tends to cater to the needs of the political system. Critical thinking and theories are hardly attempted in any policy studies. In Chinese academia, it is a common phenomenon that soon after the central government makes a political decision like the one for teacher education reform, analysts will jump into the race of writing papers /statements pledging their unconditional support, even citing faulted theories and producing doubtful findings to

claim the correctness and success of the policy. In this kind of research setting, there exist no cases of failed implementation as examined by these “policy analyses.”

Within this academic convention, real policy problems are easily neglected or covered up, and unfavorable findings from policy analyses are usually discouraged.

When looking back at the history of modern teacher education in China, we find that it has gone through a bumpy and sometimes awkward path. It has moved from being exclusively provided by normal schools/colleges/universities, to the full participation of non-teacher education institutions in providing teacher education currently. These changes are results from the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform. However, there is a shortage of implementation studies on China’s teacher education reform. The shortage of literature seriously challenges this research as an empirical case study by which the sophisticated implementation process of the national policy of teacher education are investigated. The next chapter will illustrate how the theories of teachers’ roles and identities provided a theoretical base for the Chinese policymakers to initiate the national policy of teacher education reform, and how the worldwide reforms of teacher education have impacted on the Chinese policymakers.

CHAPTER 3

NEW IDENTITIES OF TEACHERS AND TEACHER EDUCATION REFORM: A LITERATURE REVIEW

The very core of teacher education reform lies in the redefinition of the roles and identities of teachers. It is through teachers' roles that all other aspects of school systems come into contact with the learner, making teachers central to any meaningful change in educational practice. The professional roles of teachers are defined by teachers' identities which have been a contested ground for decades.

Chinese policymakers have paid serious attention to the international debates on teachers' new identities, the professionalization of teachers and the worldwide reform of teacher education. Numerous scholarly articles have been published to introduce ideas developed and discussed outside of China, and research institutes have been set up in central government offices, universities and local areas to study trends and changes in teacher training around the world. In their eagerness to build China into a modernized country through a building a high quality teacher workforce, Chinese policymakers have borrowed ideas and concepts from international literature on teachers in their policy making.

It is in this context that it is necessary for us to undertake an intensive review of

teachers' new identities, and to examine the worldwide trend in teacher professionalization to situate our understanding of the national policy of teacher education reform in China. Here I will first review how teachers' new identities are defined by theorists from various perspectives. Then, I will provide an overview of how the worldwide teacher education reforms have impacted on the Chinese policymakers.

NEW IDENTITIES FOR TEACHERS

With the Industrial Revolutions, especially the Second Industrial Revolution in the late 19th century, born was the modern school system. The mass education campaign led by Horace Mann has hugely broadened educational opportunities for all American children, sewing the need for building a democratic system and meeting the rising demand for skilled workers in the economy. The aspiration for national economic development has led governments around the world to expand education at primary and secondary level, and the aggressive spread of capitalism and the globalization movement in the late 20th century accelerated the process of educational privatization, marketization, and deregulation at all levels and in all forms. All these changes have brought shifts and changes to teachers' roles. Furthermore, the rapidly changing societal contexts with the revolution of information technology have brought about new requirements for teachers. As OECD's *Teacher Policies: General Report of the Conference* has revealed:

The role of the teacher has traditionally been to conserve the values of his society. In pluralistic societies, however, there is no longer a broadly agreed blueprint of values as a guide and the teacher face rapidly changing patterns of often conflicting versions of the good life....The teacher is no longer one of a

small group of educated people in a sea of illiteracy....Teachers are groping for personal and professional authority within changing educational structures. (OECD, 1976, pp. 104-105)

Teachers have become not only the transmitters of moral values, knowledge and skills, but professional agents who serve school systems and social development with their specialties. People have more awareness and are more concerned than ever before about how teachers are prepared by teacher education systems, as is written by Darling-Hammond (1995):

The invention of 21st century schools that can educate all children well rests, first and foremost, upon the development of a highly qualified and committed teaching force. The knowledge, skills, abilities, and commitments of teachers prepared today will shape and inform what is possible for the future generation of students. Though not yet universally recognized, the preparation, induction, and professional development of teachers is the core issue for educational reform (pp. 9-10).

New identities for teachers and how to transform their roles into classroom practices have become hot topics in policy arenas all over the world. Numerous debates and discussions encompass such issues as how teachers' roles are to be redefined at both macro and micro levels to benefit learners as well as a democratic society, and how teachers are to be prepared by teacher education at preservice and inservice stages. By reviewing these contested discourses, I will in the following review literature on teachers' roles as (a) *professional learners*, (b) *researchers*, and (c) *transformative intellectuals*.

Teachers as Professional Learners

Teachers' roles are usually discussed alongside what teachers learn, for "his performance depends as much on his mastery of one or more branches of knowledge as on his ability to inculcate such knowledge and skills" (Schwartz, 1976, pp. 114-

115). While looking at how teachers are prepared, we may pay attention to how a well-known proverb in China expects a teacher to be prepared—

A full pot of water must be prepared before you give students a cup of it.

This saying encompasses the notion that teacher learning is the key for students to succeed in learning. Western ideas about teacher learning, in fact, share the Chinese notion in a very similar way: “the teacher must have a larger store of information, and have it always ready” (Heidegger, 1972, p. 15).

Although it is widely accepted that “professional teachers must be well educated” (Shulman, 1999, p. xiii), the U.S. teacher education was defined primarily as “a learning problem” during the period from the early 1980s through the early 2000s (Cochran-Smith, 2004, p. 296). For example, the common conviction that professional learning matters to student achievement is missing in policymaking for teacher education. Instead, policy actors tend to believe that reforms in curriculum, standards and regulations, assessments and accountabilities have positive impact on teachers’ performance. However, comprehensively constructed and empirically validated theories of teacher learning that should inform teacher education are not well established. Teacher learning is viewed by policymakers as a technical training with particular curricula and methods. In addition, a comprehensive vision and perspective for coordination of professional learning across time, sites and purposes are needed for the practice of teacher education. As a result, Ball and Cohen observe (1999) that

We confront an educational system that seems poorly equipped to produce deeper and more complex learning in students as well as teachers. Weak teacher education, inherited conservative traditions, and little professional capacity for

learning and change combine to inhibit reform. (p. 5)
These learning problems, however, are not limited to the policy arena in the U.S.
They have also drawn wide attention for teacher education reform in many other countries.

International Perspectives

What and how prospective teachers should learn have various answers among policy players in varying international contexts. For instance, Schwartz (1976) illustrates four principles toward which teacher education must draw attention in the French setting (pp. 114-115). In his view, the teacher must be capable of transmitting knowledge and skills, enabling students to fit her/his acquired knowledge into a pattern, and of developing methods of thinking and acting in the students. The teacher must also be able to evaluate the results s/he has obtained and to teach the students how to evaluate themselves and the opportunities available to them. Long and Long (1999) portray the Russian model of what prospective teachers need to learn (p. 186). In their view, teachers need to be “students of teaching” with three important characteristics: have basic skills that enable them to succeed in the initial years of teaching; possess a large stock of teaching techniques and methodologies effective in helping students learning; and teach a coherent curriculum that has continuity.

In Mainland China, theorists propose that teachers must learn how to learn, teachers must have the right perspectives on talents and students, and teachers must be capable of nurturing the creative spirits and practical skills of students (Zhu, 2003, pp. 64-65). There is, however, nationwide debate about how the content of teacher education is programmed, arisen from the question of specialization (Chang & Paine;

1992; p. 81). In Taiwan, Chen introduces a model of course design and instructional strategies for preparing elementary school teachers. For example, general courses are programmed to increase general understanding of liberal arts, and specialized courses to enhance deeper understanding of content knowledge based on students' chosen discipline area, and professional courses to build comprehensive understanding of educational foundations and to cultivate educational professional knowledge and skills (Chen, 2001, p. 265).

Perspectives from the United States

American theorists and policy players have a growing awareness that “what teachers know has substantial influence on what students learn” (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1999, p. 377). Based on her understanding of how students construct their knowledge using multiple intelligences and diverse approaches to learning, Darling-Hammond (1995) calls for teachers to “build a rich knowledge base and develop tools for accessing student thinking, for understanding students' prior knowledge and background, and for connecting to students' families and communities” (pp. 12-13). She specifies a number of factors that matter for teaching: The importance of having the flexibility to teach adaptively, the importance of having close relationships with students in order to know them well and motivate them, and the critical need to focus on learning rather than on the implementation of procedures (1997, pp. 71-91). Darling-Hammond further advocates a practice-based and learner-centered teacher learning. For example, she views teaching and learning as “reciprocal” in teaching practice, with learning experiences continually reshaped by students' changing needs and understandings (1997, p. 118).

Some theorists provide alternative policy orientations for teacher learning. Ball and Cohen (1999) propose five fundamental guidelines for constructing the knowledge teachers need to learn as professional learners (pp. 7-10). They believe that teachers need to learn the subject matter they will teach in ways quite different from those they learned as students. Teachers need to understand, in addition to their knowledge about subjects, what children are like, and what they are likely to find interesting and to have trouble with in particular domains and situations. They also view that teachers need to become acquainted with cultural differences in which languages, classes, families, communities and gender are taken into account. In their view, integrating knowledge and teaching practice should be central to teachers' roles. They therefore recommend practice-based professional learning by incorporating professional education with teachers' practice. Their proposal aims at fundamentally changing teaching and teacher education with a "pedagogy of professional development" (1999, p. 25), which is considered as "a continuum of learning, with teacher located at various places along the continuum" (Craig, Kraft & Plessis, 1998, pp. 1-3). In the continuum of teachers' professional learning, Gary Sykes (1999) further elaborates on the relationship of teacher professional development and student learning. He argues that the teacher-student learning connection should serve as a criterion for selection of professional and school development activity while policy provides the broad framework for teacher and student learning (pp. 161-171).

In addition to tightening the connection between teacher learning and student learning, policymakers and stakeholders must provide opportunities to integrate teachers' professional learning into a supportive school environment on an

organizational basis. Little (1999) identifies the diverse aspects of organizing school community for teacher learning as follows:

Teacher learning arises out of close involvement with students and their work, shared responsibility for student progress, sensibly organized time and space, access to the expertise of colleagues inside and overall ethos in which teacher learning is valued. (p. 233)

Apart from detailing these factors that have direct impact on teacher learning, Little (1999) emphasizes a key shift from discrete staff development activities or programs toward a view of a school's organizational capacity to support teacher learning (p. 257).

Whatever teachers need to learn, policymaking and implementation are likely the keys to providing initiatives for improving teacher preparation, development and practice. In order to link policymaking with investment in teaching as a learning profession, Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1999) outline specific recommendations for policy actions:

(1) Attract, recruit, and retain people in teaching who have the ability and disposition to teach well; (2) help teachers—and the profession as a whole—develop strong professional norms, knowledge, and skills; and (3) create incentives and organizational conditions that support teachers' and students' learning in schools. (p. 382)

In addressing these policy orientations, the ultimate challenge to policy players lies in realizing the tight connections between teacher learning and student learning, since “student learning is the ultimate justification for teacher learning” (Sykes, 1999, p. 175). Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1999) suggest a number of strategic options for policymakers (pp. 385-390). For example, standards-based strategies aimed at establishing goals for teachers' professional performance to speed up changes in student learning goals, curriculum, and assessment. The effectiveness of

these strategic alternatives may vary from one to another, but all depend on the extent to which they create more powerful contexts for and approaches to teachers' professional learning, and the extent to which teachers encounter comprehensive, cumulative, and reinforcing learning opportunities over the course of their careers.

Early in the 1960s, Bruner has revealed that “if the teacher is also learning, teaching takes on a new quality. The teacher is also an immediately personal symbol of the educational process, a figure with whom students can identify and compare themselves” (1960, p. 90). In this sense, the notion of teachers as professional learners has particular meaning to student achievement. Policymakers must first demonstrate close attention to teacher learning, and then create a tight connection between policy and teaching.

Teachers as Reflective Researchers

The notion of teachers as reflective researchers has been debated for decades as a new identity for teachers in policy arena. This section provides the background, definition and various models of teacher research, compares it with research on teaching, and discusses the relationship of teacher research and teacher professional development.

Background and Definition

Teacher research has roots in action research. Kurt Lewin, an American social psychologist and educator, employed action research to bring social science directly into a “natural setting” of social practice in the 1940s. Lewin is “credited with coining the term ‘action research’ to describe work that did not separate the investigation from

the action needed to solve the problem” (McFarland & Stansell, 1993, p. 14). Action research is viewed as an effective instrument that improves teacher performance, because teachers will not only put back into practices their own findings and reflections learnt from practices, but also pragmatically contribute to a general theoretical knowledge body in education.

Teachers as researchers was first termed in the late 1960s by Lawrence Stenhouse. He advocated for teachers to work also as researchers engaged in activities of “doing” where ethical qualities are integrated in both research and practice. Teacher research is gradually embraced by teachers, researchers and policy players because of the difficulties of applying quantitative experimental methodologies to complicated human settings and the rapid rise of qualitative inquiries. In addition, teachers are not satisfied with research where “teachers are ‘studied down’ in the sense that those who control the research use their inquiry to inform themselves about their subordinates (mere practitioners), later using their information to manipulate and control them” (Kincheloe, 2003, p. 35). Teacher research empowers teachers with their own expertise, experiences, and involvements in policy actions.

Teacher research is commonly used as a kind of umbrella to define a wide range of practices, but is generally accepted as “systematic and intentional inquiry carried out by teachers in their own schools and classrooms” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, p. 7; Lytle & Cochran-Smith, 1994, p. 24). “Systematic” refers primarily to ordered ways of gathering and recording information, documenting experiences inside and outside of classrooms, and making some kind of written record. “Intentional” refers to deliberate learning. “Inquiry” means to make sense of their

experiences in the classroom by generating questions or reflecting teachers' desires (Lytle & Cochran-Smith, 1990, p. 84). This definition locates teachers at the center of the stage, identifies them as key actors in developing the important ideas and carrying out the procedures, and emphasizes the need for teachers to have a voice in and to reclaim their classrooms. Through their own involvement in research, teachers are able to strengthen their judgments and improve their own classroom practices (Rudduck & Hopkins, 1985).

Teacher Research and Teacher Professional Development

Teacher researchers are able to “revolutionize professional practice by viewing themselves as potentially the most sophisticated research instrument available” (Kincheloe, 2003, p. 52). Teacher research enhances teachers' roles played in classrooms, school communities, and society in many ways. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993) argue that teacher research has merit for the teaching community as well as the academic community (pp. 18-20). Zeichner (1994) outlines four contributions of teacher research to generating knowledge. Firstly, teacher research empowers teachers to generate knowledge and theories for teacher education that have traditionally been produced and predominated by university-based academics (Zeichner, 1994, p. 70). Secondly, a large volume of literature shows that teacher research facilitates the development of individual teachers by boosting their confidence, narrowing the gap between their aspirations and realizations, revising their personal theories of teaching, and internalizing the disposition to study their teaching practice over time (Zeichner, 1994, p. 73). Thirdly, despite criticisms of teachers for the narrowness of their research, there are in fact many cases of teacher

research which have resulted in significant changes at the institutional level, such as changes in school policies and authorities (Zeichner, 1994, p. 77). Finally, teacher research helps teachers to play a conscious role in the social environment of schools, to examine the social and political implications of their own actions, and to act in ways which promote the realization of democratic values (Zeichner, 1994, p. 79).

In addition to Zeichner's general suggestions, there are some other specific benefits for teacher development from teacher research. For instance, Hollingsworth and Miller (1994) argue from feminist perspectives that teacher research provides female teachers the opportunity to challenge, deconstruct, selectively integrate, and/or rewrite some gender-designated roles, and explicitly make room for values and perspectives often associated with women's socialized experiences in teaching and research (pp. 126-127; p. 132). Cochran-Smith (1994) contends that teacher research in pre-service teacher education must be located within networks of school-university relations (p. 143). She argues that teacher research has "enormous potential in pre-service teacher education" but not if considered as one among many "techniques or strategies" for teaching (Cochran-Smith, 1994, p. 161). The real power of teacher research, in the view of Cochran-Smith (1994), lies in the potential to "interrupt the conventional ways student teachers are initiated into the oral and written discourse of teaching, and the powerful images of teaching and learning implicit in that discourse" (p. 161).

The notion of teachers as reflective researchers also carries another important connotation, i.e., transforming teachers from conventional professionals into reflective actors. It is commonly accepted that "people are moved to learn when they

ask themselves questions—questions that demand answers if restlessness or hunger or unhappiness is to be allayed” (Greene, 2001, p. 83). In this sense, reflective teaching has a fundamental impact on student learning. Soon after Donal Schon published *The Reflective Practitioner* in 1983, the American educational reform moved toward transforming reflective teachers through pre-service and in-service teacher education. The diversity of reflective perspectives from various practitioners in fields has “ensured a better understanding of issues for social change” (Hollingsworth & Sockett, 1994, p. 6). From the perspectives of reflectivity, conventional research on teaching, however, is “technical,” “fragmented,” and “shallow” (Lanier & Little, 1986, pp. 527-569). As Valli (1992) critiques, the process/product research has “failed to generate a substantial and significant set of findings to guide the preparation of teachers” (p. xiii). Its paradigm has been seriously challenged as “an inadequate way” to explain and guide teaching (Richardson, 1990, pp. 3-19; Tom & Valli, 1990, pp. 373-392).

As opposed to the “trickle-down” view of the relationship of theory to practice, reflective epistemology is “learning-by-doing (action),” a term coined by John Dewey for reflective teaching practice (1938). According to Dewey, the process of reflection for teachers begins when they “experience a difficulty, troublesome event, or experience that cannot be immediately resolved” (Zeichner & Liston, 1996, p. 8). He distinguishes action that is reflective from action that is routine in his book, *How We Think* (1910). In a pluralistic society, successful teacher preparation requires critical reflection on the normative issues of teaching and schooling (Valli, 1992, p. xiii). From the perspective of “knowledge-in-action” (Schon, 1983), teacher research is

viewed as the vehicle to teacher emancipation.

The notion of teachers as reflective researchers paves a new path for classroom practice to adopt different ways of knowing, different forms of knowledge, and different approaches to research. It brings fundamental changes by constructing teachers' roles that are largely determined by how teachers are prepared by the teacher education system and how teachers employ their values, perspectives, knowledge, and skills in classrooms and school communities. It also enormously helps achieving higher standards and greater accountability for school improvement and teaching excellence. The notion of teachers as reflective researchers, however, issues great challenges for conventional system and policymaking of teacher education in pre-service and in-service stages, teachers' transformative learning and practices in classrooms, and for empowering the teachers' roles in generating professional knowledge, reflections, values and perspectives of teaching.

Teachers as Transformative Intellectuals

While various roles teachers play in classrooms, schools and society are widely discussed and debated, critical theorists promote an orientation of teachers as transformative intellectuals. This section provides the background, definition, political dimension and strategies of teachers as transformative intellectuals, presents a real example of the struggles of teachers as transformative intellectuals in contemporary China, and compares the role of teachers as transformative intellectuals with other roles aforementioned.

Definition and Background

The term of “transformative intellectual” was first used and discussed in *Education under Siege* by Aronowitz and Giroux (1985). Aronowitz and Giroux (1993) define transformative intellectuals as a body of teachers who can “employ the discourse of self-criticism so as to make the foundations for a critical pedagogy explicit while simultaneously illuminating the relevance of the latter for both students and the larger society” (pp. 45-46). This definition implies that teachers must be capable of critical reflection based on individual learning experience that is consistent from pre-service to in-service teacher education, and on teaching experience that is constructed either through independent practices or collective actions in classrooms. Meanwhile, the notion of teachers as transformative intellectuals calls for action exercises resulting from critical reflection to changing power relations not only in classrooms and schools, but in broader domains such communities and society as well. Central to the definition is that teachers as transformative intellectuals must, in Apple’s terms (2000, p. 7), participate in progressive social movements and groups that continue to challenge the multiple relations of exploitation and domination that exist in an “organic” way.

There are three reasons why teachers as transformative intellectuals are centered in critical theorists’ attention. First of all, the democratic goals of schooling require teachers to act as transformative intellectuals, for “any attempt to reformulate the role of educators has to begin with the broader question of how to view the purpose of schooling” (Giroux, 1988, p. xxxii). Second, teacher work is devalued and proletarianized by the redefinition of teachers’ roles in classrooms and teachers’

relationship to larger society, arising from teacher professionalization and instrumental ideologies of teacher preparation. Finally, politicizing the notion of teachers as transformative intellectuals helps to clarify teachers' roles "in producing and legitimating various political, economic and social interests through the pedagogies they endorse and utilize" (Giroux, 1988, p. 125). Grouping teachers as transformative intellectuals enables them to build alliances empowered with critical pedagogy to launch a struggle of counter-hegemonic practice of education together with students in a collective way.

Political Dimension

Critical theories believe that a *political dimension* is embodied in both teacher education and in teacher socialization, since teachers work and live within relations of power (Ginsburg & Lindsay, 1995, p. 4). The central task for teachers as transformative intellectuals is to make "the pedagogical more political and the political more pedagogical" (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1993, p. 46). On the one hand, by making the pedagogical more political, education is envisioned as a central political terrain which provides teachers with numerous opportunities to act as transformative social agents. Apple (2000) reiterates that education is "one of the major sites in which different groups with distinct political, economic, and cultural visions attempt to define what the socially legitimate means and ends of a society are to be" (p. 17). On the other hand, by making the political more pedagogical, teachers' roles are employed to develop the creative and reflective thinking and actions of students as critical agents who utilize dialogue and make meaning of knowledge for emancipation. In other words, classroom teaching should offer students alternative

forms of discourse and pedagogical practices in which students' interests are often at odds with the overall hegemonic role of the school and the society it serves.

The notion of teachers as transformative intellectuals greatly challenges the current system of pre-service and in-service teacher education. While a given body of knowledge, e.g., curricula and textbooks, is viewed as socially constructed, strategically recontextualized, systematically reproduced, and officially informed in classrooms (Apple, 2000; 1999; Giroux, 1988; 2001; Popkewitz, 1987), conservative policy actions of teacher education based on instrumental ideologies continue to emphasize a technocratic approach to teacher preparation. These conservative reforms are usually coupled with, and under name of, such initiatives as accountability, standardization, productivity and efficiency, cost-effective analysis, quantitative assessment and measurement, and neutrality and subjectivity. Paine (1995) offers her evidence by discussing China's rational and technical orientation for teacher education from "modernizing" and "nationalizing" perspectives (pp. 89-92). Many teachers still keep the "habits" or "instincts" of using the "curriculum on a cart" in its current form (Apple, 2000, p. 131), even though they are clear that this minimizes their capacity to make difference in classroom teaching. Teachers as transformative intellectuals, however, require the teacher education system to encourage prospective students or in-service teachers' curiosity and reflectivity to interrogate not only how subjectivities and experience are shaped, produced and regulated through historically produced social forms such as schools and how these forms carry and embody particular interests, but also "how certain apparatuses of power forms of knowledge that legitimate a particular kind of truth and way of life" (Giroux, 1988, p. xxxv).

Strategies for Teachers as Transformative Intellectuals

Some useful strategies for teachers as transformative intellectuals to address the perplexing quandary are proposed by radical theorists. For instance, Aronowitz and Giroux (1993) posit that central to the role of the transformative intellectuals are the forms of counter-hegemonic practices that start forming alliances among transformative intellectuals, together with critical intellectuals if possible, and actively work with oppositional social movements outside of the schools (p. 50). As discussed by Aronowitz and Giroux (1993), teachers functioning as transformative intellectuals can collectively organize to engage in various projects aimed at better understanding the critical roles teachers play at all levels of schooling in producing, reproducing, and legitimating social relations of power. Not only would such alliances provide a political unity for teachers who fight against accommodating and hegemonic intellectuals, but also open radical and critical actors to the opportunity to communicate and share with each other their common concerns and social constructions. Moreover, such alliances bring the possibility for tightening the relationship between theory and practice within the alliances' respective contexts, e.g., universities, public schools, and outside of school sites. Still, the alliances have practical value in fundamentally changing the unfavorable working environments and living conditions of teachers under siege: teachers are usually isolated in cellular structures and thus have very limited room for collective work and political pursuits under current organizational constraints and ideological conditions; they are reduced to obedient technicians or instruments of delivering "official knowledge", who have little say over the decisions of what and how should be taught in classroom; their

workload are too heavy, i.e., too many assigned jobs; their living conditions are worldwide worse than those of average salaried persons and governmental officials; and their salaries are far lower than those of comparably educated professionals (Sizer, 1984, p. 185).

Examples in Real World

There are numerous examples of the struggle of teachers as transformative intellectuals to be found in real world. I will give a case from China in the early 20th century. Tao Xingzhi (1891-1946), a renowned Chinese educator who was born in a disadvantaged peasant family in a mountainous village located in south Anhui Province, came to the U.S. studying education in the 1910s under the supervision of John Dewey and Paul Monroe at Teachers College of Columbia University. Tao devoted his whole life to adult literacy and life education in hopes of achieving his dream of a democratic society for China. His life education theory espoused “an education of life, by life and for life” (Li, 1998a, p. 268), an idea for schooling echoed to Abraham Lincoln’s address at Gettysburg in 1863. Life education theory consists of three components: life is education; society is school; and teaching and learning by doing (Sun, 2000, pp. 472-475). Tao saw the traditional schooling in China during that time as an education for elites and upper class to maintain the status quo of inequality in power relations, instead of an education for the oppressed for the majority of Chinese people and democratic society. More importantly, he put his theory into such active social practices as setting up several normal schools and higher education institutions in the most difficult times of China during the 1920s-1940s. The first school he established was Xiaozhuang Normal School (*Xiaozhuang*

Shifan) in 1927, now Nanjing Xiaozhuang College. Tao himself was a professor of education at Nanjing Higher Normal School (*Nanjing Gaodeng Shifan Xuexiao*), and paid special attention to teacher education on which life education was based. In his critical view, both teachers and students must have an understanding of the real needs of social life, and must involve with learning through a daily based process (Li, 1998a, p. 271). Without doubt, Tao Xingzhi was a pioneer of transformative intellectuals aggressively engaged in emancipatory struggles for China's democracy.

The notion of teachers as transformative intellectuals redirects our attention regarding teachers' roles from simple learning professionals to politically involved social agents. It shares commonalities with the notions of teachers as professional learners and reflective researchers in that the quality of teachers for a democratic society is constructed and prepared. It also differs from these notions in self-consciousness, self-criticism and social actions for democratic goals of teaching and schooling. The notion greatly challenges how teachers redefine their identities and roles inside school communities and outside of campus as well, and deeply interrogates the status quo of teacher education reform.

TEACHER PROFESSIONALIZATION AND WORLDWIDE TEACHER EDUCATION REFORM

By examining the above discourses by which teachers' roles and identities have been developed and redefined in dissimilar cultural contexts, we see that teaching is a professional job performed by certain group of people who own knowledge and skills, as well as a highly contested and fiercely conflicted political arena on which

schooling is exercised. While teachers are swept up in the vortex of the political conflicts, their roles and identities are put into examinations or interrogations under diverse names by various interest groups or classes. These discourses on teachers' roles pave the way for the professionalization of teachers.

Professionalization of Teachers

From institutional perspectives, there are important attributes of professionals which distinguish teachers from other kinds of work and workers (Hughes 1965; Vollmer and Mills 1966; Hall 1968; Turner, 1997; Wallace 1994). These attributes include rigorous training requirements, favorable working conditions, high prestige and autonomy, substantial authority, relatively high compensation, and an active professional organization or association. From this point of view, teachers can be assessed according to the degree to which they do or do not exhibit the above attributes. The process whereby teachers seek to upgrade their professional status by adopting the attributes is known as teacher professionalization. Teacher professionalization is a sociological process by which teachers gain professional status and privilege.

Teacher professionalization has been a worldwide educational movement aiming to promote the professional status of teachers and improve the quality of teacher workforce since the 1960s. Early in 1934, the International Bureau of Education, for the first time, directed attention to the professional, social and economic problems of the teaching profession (The World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession & the Japan Teachers' Union, 1972, p. 2). It was on October 5th of 1966 that *The ILO/UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the*

Status of Teachers was adopted by the Special Intergovernmental Conference on the Status of Teachers in Paris.¹¹ This document creatively proposed the notion of teaching as a profession:

Teaching should be regarded as a profession: it is a form of public service which requires of teachers expert knowledge and specialized skills, acquired and maintained through rigorous and continuing study; it calls also for a sense of personal and corporate responsibility for the education and welfare of the pupils in their charge. (THE UNESCO, 1966, p. 6)

Beside the above guiding principle, the *ILO/UNESCO Recommendation* set some basic standards of preparation programs for the profession (THE UNESCO, 1966, pp. 11-16). ILO/UNESCO reiterated that the professional knowledge and skills of teachers must be included in these preparation programs in teacher-preparation institutions.

In 1972, the Faure-led International Commission on the Development of Education released its final report, *Learning To Be: The World of Education Today and Tomorrow*. This report observed many significant changes in teachers' roles, such as changes to less and less "inculcate knowledge and more and more to encourage thinking" (The International Commission on the Development of Education [ICDE], 1972, p. 77). For training the "very important socio-professional group" (ICDE, 1972, p. 17), *Learning to Be* clarified the following principle and recommended a teacher preparation strategy for policymakers worldwide:

One of the essential tasks for educators at present is to change the mentalities and qualifications inherent in all professions; thus they should be the first to be ready to rethink and change the criteria and basic situation of the teaching

¹¹ *The ILO/UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers* was made based on the conclusions of the ILO Expert Meetings on Social and Economical Conditions of Primary and Secondary School Teachers in Geneva in 1963 and of the ILO Expert Meeting on the Status of Teachers in Paris in 1964. For detailed formulation and adoption of *The Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers*, please refer to the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession & the Japan Teachers' Union, 1972, p. 2-6.

profession Conditions in which teachers are trained should be profoundly changed so that, essentially, they become educators rather than specialists in transmitting pre-established curricula. (ICDE, 1972, pp. 216-217)

In 1974, OECD held the Intergovernmental Conference on Teacher Policies for teacher preparation.¹² The conference report appealed to examine the changing role of teachers and its implications, and called for fundamental changes in the policies of training, recruitment, and utilization of teachers. It confirmed

the remarkable unanimity that exists on the dimensions of the new education that children in the latter part of the twentieth should be entitled to receive. These dimensions included the development of individuality, the opportunity to be creative, the exercise of judgement, in short the capacity to be able to participate fully in the whole range of life activities in work, home and community. The teacher's role was seen essentially to be one that allowed such development through appropriate patterns of teaching, curriculum organization, pastoral care and guidance. (OECD, 1976, pp. 108-109)

By this notion, the report took into account the access to the teaching profession, and gave priority to teachers' continuing training which was required to "meet the needs of teachers and school administrators as well as the wishes and needs of pupils and their parents" (OECD, 1976, p. 135).

Persisting efforts were made by the UNESCO for teacher professionalization and teacher education reform. The UNESCO Thirty-Fifth Session of the International Conference on Education held in Geneva in 1975 adopted *The Changing Role of the Teacher and Its Influence on Preparation for the Profession and on In-service Training*. This document first identified the following factors as the societal and educational causes to the changes in teachers' roles: industrialization, urbanization and geographical mobility, modern technology, greater community involvement,

¹² The OECD organized, in the framework of the Program of Work of the Education Committee, the Intergovernmental Conference on Teacher Policies which took place in Paris, November 26th-29th, 1974. *Teacher Policies: General Report of the Conference* was released by OECD later in 1976.

educational aims and objectives, educational structures, and teaching content and methods (THE UNESCO, 1975, pp. 8-16). The document then concluded eight main trends in changes in teachers' roles, such as more diversified functions in the teaching process and more responsibility for the content of learning and teaching, a shift in emphasis from transmission of knowledge to organization of the pupils' learning, wider use of modern educational technology, necessary knowledge and skills, more closely working with parents and other people in the community and more involvement in community life, more participation in school services and extra-curricular activities, and so on (THE UNESCO, 1975, pp. 17).

This report diagnosed that “there is a substantial level of discordance between the rapid changes in the educational systems followed by changes in the role of the teacher and the slow rate at which the teacher training systems respond to these changes” (THE UNESCO, 1975, p. 24). Based on such a diagnosis, the report appealed that the changing roles of teachers must be taken into consideration in teacher education reform and that there should be corresponding changes in approaches to teacher education. As a result, the UNESCO Thirty-Fifth Session proposed a series of suggestions for teacher education reform as the following:

- Since there will always be changes in the society and education which will influence the role and functions of the teacher, it is essential that future teachers become adaptable and capable of responding to changes. In teacher education, personality development should be stressed in this sense, encouraging young teachers to accept and seek change and to seek self-education and self-development;
- The traditional pattern by which the teachers are trained for work in a specific type of educational institution should be changed;
- The academic level of general and subject knowledge for teacher preparation must be raised;

- A better pedagogical preparation must be provided by teacher education institutions;
- Teacher education reforms are required to emphasize the use of educational technology; and
- Teacher education reform should respond to national development. (THE UNESCO, 1975, pp. 23-27)

The officially recognized notion of teaching as a profession and recommendations for teacher education reform made by ILO, UNESCO and OECD threw enlightening light on professionalization of teachers and teacher education policy actions worldwide.

Worldwide Teacher Education Reform

In Japan, a report was submitted to the Minister of Education in 1971 by the Central Council of Education (CCE), delineating the policies for the Third Educational Reform.¹³ This report, *The Fundamental Policies for Education Reform*, recognized that teaching requires high professional knowledge and skills, and suggested that elementary schoolteachers should be trained in teachers colleges; teachers colleges should be expanded; a one-year internship program should be considered; and teaching certification system should be enhanced (The Central Council of Education, 1971).

In 1984, the National Council on Education Reform (NCER) came into being as an advisory panel directly attached to the Prime Minister's Office. The NCER has paid special attention to teacher education reform in its consecutive four reports since 1985 (Takakura, 1993, p. 16; Mizoue & Inoue, 1993, p. 23). The NCER's 1986 report

¹³ Japan's First Education Reform was undertaken in the early years of the Meiji Era and the Second in the years after the Second World War (UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Asia, 1975, p.4).

was the most important driving force for the 1988 amendment of *the Educational Personnel Certification Law* which was originally enacted in 1949. In its 1986 report, NCER emphasized on improving the quality of teachers by such measures as reform of the teacher education and certification system and systematization of the in-service education for teachers (The NCER, 1986).

In the new century, the Japanese government continues to prioritize teacher education as one of the seven strategies for its national education initiative (The National Commission on Education Reform, 2002). In addition, Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has come up with a new policy to merge and reform colleges and schools of education since April 2003. This plan transforms all national/public higher education institutions into the so-called independent administrative institutions which run like independent public organizations (*dokuritsu gyosei hojinka*). Recent policy actions of teacher education in Japan are directed to improve the overall quality of the profession instead of to pursue a quantitative increase of the labor force (Arimoto, 2002; Besso & Suzuki, 2002).

In Canada, teacher education reform varies across geographic areas due to two traditional factors. One is that education is a provincial responsibility and teachers are not government employees. Another is that teachers are comparatively well organized into provincial and territorial teacher associations which basically function as a teacher union and provide professional development for teachers (Connelly & Clandinin, 2001, p. 2). In 1990, the Ontario Teacher Education Review Steering Committee's report, *Teacher Education in Ontario: Current Practice and Options for*

the Future (Fullan, Connelly & Watson, 1990), is a blueprint for teacher education in Ontario (Kosnik & Beck, 2001, p. 57). The report noted that one of teachers' roles is professional learning: "Instead of trying to 'make' a good teacher through teacher education, as one might make a sculpture, we need to do as John Dewey suggested, and think of teachers as learners" (Fullan et al., 1990, p. 57). *Teacher Education in Ontario* proposed a number of themes that teacher education reform should address. Among these themes is that teacher education is viewed as a life-long learning process:

One of the assumptions we make about teacher education is that it is a matter of life-long learning. We extend the idea of teacher education backwards in time from the faculty of education to include teachers' general education and social origins. As is well known, these origins are critical to the quality not only of the teaching profession but of teacher educators. (Fullan et al., 1990, p. 57)

In 1997, the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) was established for setting up standards of teaching practice and conduct, issuing and administering teaching certificates, and accrediting teacher education programs and courses. In 2000, OCT released *Professional Learning Framework for the Teaching Profession* which states: the goal of professional learning is the ongoing improvement of practice, and teacher learning is directly correlated to student learning. The report supports standards-based professional learning (The Ontario College of Teachers, 2004, p. 27).¹⁴ These policy actions significantly shaped the teaching profession and the practice of teacher education in Ontario.

Similar to teacher education in Canada, the U.S. federal government's role in

¹⁴ OCT has released a series of guidelines for teaching and teacher education. For example, *the Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* were approved by the OCT Council on November 19, 1999. The *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* were approved by the OCT Council on June 8, 2000. The *Professional Learning Framework for the Teaching Profession* was approved by the OCT Council in October 2000.

the preparation of teacher has been traditionally regarded as “modest, limited and of short duration” (Jordan & Borkow, 1985, as cited in Earley & Schneider, 1996, p. 306; Early, 2000, p. 25), but this does not necessarily mean that the reform of the teaching profession and the reform of teacher education systems in the U.S. are not addressed. In April 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education formed by then-US Secretary of Education Terrel H. Bell released a highly critical report, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for School Reform*, which began a pursuit-for-excellent movement in the U.S. with an emphasis on teacher professionalization. In response to *A Nation at Risk*, *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* was released by the Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession (1986). The Carnegie Task Force reaffirmed teachers as the best hope for ensuring educational excellence in schooling and called for the redesign and revitalization of the teaching profession. An outgrowth of this report was the establishment of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards for attracting able candidates to the profession.

Riding the momentum, since 1986, the Holmes Group has released a trilogy of reports for teacher professionalization and teacher education reform, i.e., *Tomorrow's Teachers* (1986), *Tomorrow's Schools* (1990) and *Tomorrow's Schools of Education* (1995), aiming at the twin goals of the reform of the teaching profession and the reform of teacher education itself. By these influential reports, the Holmes Group identified the following serious problems existing in the teaching profession and teacher education systems:

Unhappily, teaching and teacher education have a long history of mutual impairment. Teacher education long has been intellectually weak; this further eroded the prestige of an already poorly esteemed profession, and it encouraged many inadequately prepared people to enter teaching. But teaching long has

been an underpaid and overworked occupation, making it difficult for universities to recruit good students to teacher education or to take it as seriously as they have taken education for more prestigious professions. Teaching, after all, comes with large responsibilities but modest material rewards. Good teachers must be knowledgeable, but they have few opportunities to use that knowledge to improve their profession, or to help their colleagues improve. And, despite their considerable skill and knowledge, good teachers have few opportunities to advance within their profession. (The Holmes Group, 1986, p. 6)

To enhance the quality of teaching and the preparation of professionals in teaching by research and development, the Holmes Group set five goals for policy initiatives of teacher education reform. These are to make teaching intellectually sound; to recognize difference in teachers' knowledge, skill, and commitment; to create relevant and intellectually defensible standards of entry to teaching; to connect schools of education to the schools, and; to make schools better places for practicing teachers to work and learn (Holmes Group, 1995, pp. iii-vi).

Tomorrow's Teachers envisioned that the established professional status of teachers rests on a compound of subject matter knowledge, systematic knowledge of teaching and reflective practical experience (The Holmes Group, 1986, pp. 62-63).

Tomorrow's Schools creatively proposed the idea of establishing professional development schools as an alternative for the development of novice professionals and experienced professionals, and for the research and development of the teaching profession (The Holmes Group, 1990, p. 1). *Tomorrow's Schools of Education* criticized the status quo of teacher education systems for preparing the professionals who have for too long been learning too little of the right things in the wrong place at the wrong time (The Holmes Group, 1995, p. 9). For the preparation of a highly qualified teaching profession, the Holmes Group further advocated a complete restructuring of higher education institutions for designing a new curriculum,

developing a new faculty, recruiting a new student body, creating new locations for much of their work, and building a new set of connections to those they serve (The Holmes Group, 1995, pp. 9-10).

Both the Carnegie Task Force and the Holmes Group directed their concerns and efforts toward the professionalization of teaching and the reform of educational systems preparing the profession (Engvall, 1997, p. 47). Since the 1990s, there have been a number of federal policy actions addressing the reform of the profession or the reform of teacher education systems, e.g., *the Higher Education Amendments of 1992*, *Goals 2000: Educate America Act*, *National Board for Professional Teaching Standards*, and so forth (Earley & Schneider, 1996; Sikula, 2001).

Besides Japan, Canada and the U.S., many other countries such as U.K. have also paid high attention to the reform of the teaching profession and the reform of teacher education. For example, the U.K. has sought to strengthen and support the professional skills of teachers (The Department for Education & Skills, 2001). The international movement of teacher professionalization and teacher education reform speeded up the new round of China's teacher education reform launched from the early 1990s. Traditionally, there was no real profession of teaching in ancient Chinese history, though the nation has a heavy tradition of respecting teachers for thousands of years (Hayhoe, 2002, p. 6). A licensing system for elementary schoolteachers was set up only in the late 1910s (Chen, 1981, p. 278; Sun, 1971, pp. 531-533), and it was not until the mid-1980s that the Chinese government realized that teacher professionalization is key to improving the quality of the workforce (The CPCCC & the State Council, 1985, May 27). On October 31st 1993 a teacher certification

system was adopted by national law (The Standing Commission of National People's Congress [SCNPC], 1993, October 31). Nowadays, the teaching profession and the education for the teaching professionals are still under development in China.

TEACHERS' NEW IDENTITIES AND TEACHER PROFESSIONALIZATION IN CHINA'S POLICY CASE

The new identities of teachers proposed by Western theorists and the worldwide movement of teacher professionalization have had profound influence on the national policy of teacher education reform in China. The following section outlines how the Chinese policymakers integrated these theories and discourses into Chinese sociopolitical context to initiate the national policy of teacher education reform.

Traditional Chinese Perspectives on Teachers' Roles

In traditional Chinese culture, specifically, in Confucian values, teachers are known to be valued as the most important players in transmitting knowledge and skills to students, and as the ideal role models for ordinary people, especially for the young generation. Lo (1984) documents that three qualities, competence in subject matter, teaching ability and moral character, were required of the ideal teachers in ancient China (p. 156). Therefore, a strong tradition in Chinese culture sees teachers as the major instrument to provide education for private and public goods.

Confucius (551-479 B.C.) first addressed knowledge as a prerequisite for teachers: "Reviewing the old and exploring the new make a teacher" (*The Analects*, 2.11). He realized that all students have potential for intellectual and moral

development (*The Analects*, 9.22), and that teachers and students need to learn from each other (*The Analects*, 15.35). Moreover, he viewed teaching and learning as an interactive process with teachers playing key roles as co-learners, cheerleaders, mentors, and moral role models. As a pioneer teacher in ancient China, Confucius greatly contributed to the formation of the traditional values of *zunshi* (respecting teacher) (Li, 1998b, p. 132), and the formation of the teaching occupation (Li, 1998a, pp. 43-44). The Confucian values of teachers' roles were further developed by Han Yu (768-824) in the Tang dynasty as *chuandao* (transmitting moral values and principles), *shouye* (delivering knowledge and skills) and *jiehuo* (solving doubts of learning) (Han, n.d., as cited in Li, 1998a, p. 163). Lee (2000) observes that, "the Chinese people have since cherished this famous dictum as the best characterization of a model teacher" (p. 258). The roles of teachers as knowledge transmitters and role models are deeply implanted and internalized into Chinese culture and schooling.

From the early nineteenth century, the Qing dynasty had seriously suffered from the invasion and exploitation of Western powers. Early politicians and theorists tried hard to look for self-strengthening ways to save the future of China. Among them, Liang Qichao, a prominent politician and scholar, first advocated the development of a modern teacher education system, warning that "only after normal schools are instituted, will the whole learning system have its support" (Liang, 1896, as cited in Sun, 2000, p. 337). He argued that teachers trained by traditional Confucian education were incapable of teaching students in modern science and technology. Recognizing the Confucian viewpoint of teachers as knowledge transmitters and moral role models, Liang redefined knowledge as both traditional

Confucian principles and Western knowledge (science and technology). Teachers, in his view, are the key instruments in delivering Western knowledge for national self-strengthening and revival.

The Influences of Western Theories on China's National Policy of Teacher

Education Reform

The traditional Chinese perspectives of teachers' roles have powerful influence on the national policy of teacher education reform. The Chinese policymakers strongly believed that teachers are a powerful instrument in achieving national modernization. For example, the leaders of the Chinese central government put in the policy documents clearly that "education is the hope for rejuvenating our nation, and the hope for rejuvenating education is teachers" (1993, February 13). Later in 1996, the State Commission of Education articulated the rationale for teacher education reform as the following:

Making teacher education a success and training a highly qualified teaching profession shall have profound impact on the development of schooling, the quality improvement of the whole Chinese people as a nation, the implementation of the strategy of national rejuvenation through science and education and that of sustainable development, and propelling economic development and promoting all-round social progress. (The SCE, 1996, December 5)

The Chinese leaders, as previously discussed in Chapter Two, theorized teachers as the foundation for education development and national achievement

(TE→TQ→QS/SA →WQ→MD/EG→NA). It is obvious that the roles of teachers were seen by the Chinese policymakers from a perspective of instrumentalism.

Although the Chinese policymakers adhered to the traditional Chinese perspectives of teachers' roles, they also embraced the Western theories of teachers'

new identities in the national policy of teacher education reform. In most of the relevant policy documents for the national policy of teacher education reform, the Chinese policymakers reiterated that teachers must first be lifetime learners and researchers. For example, *the Opinion on the Reform and Development of Teacher Education during the Tenth Five-year National Plan* requires that teachers

must promote their awareness of lifetime learning; continue extending their professional knowledge and skills...actively participate in teaching and educational research, and be encouraged for the exploration and innovation of knowledge and skills. (The MOE, 2002, February 6)

Similar statements or requirements were easily found in other policy documents or policymakers' appeal. Guan Peijun, the Director of the Department of Teacher Education at the Ministry of Education, advocated that "teachers must be the pioneers and role models for a learning society" (2003). In his opinion, teachers have responsibility to not only be professional learners or reflective researchers, but the advocates of professional learning and reflective research.

Although the Chinese policymakers embraced the Western theories of teachers as professional learners and reflective researchers, they did this from a perspective of instrumentalism. It seemed that they did not have much interest in the theories of teachers as transformative intellectuals. No single word or statement in these policy documents or leaders' appeals mentioned the roles of teachers as transformative intellectuals. The reasons could be multiple, but the adherence to centralized control and fear of any political rebellions may help explain why the roles of teachers as transformative intellectuals were not encouraged by the national policy of teacher education reform.

The Worldwide Movement of Teacher Professionalization and China's National Policy of Teacher Education Reform

The Chinese policymakers saw teacher professionalization as one major trend of international educational reforms. For example, Guan Peijun (2003) has appealed:

Since the 1980s, teacher professionalization has become a strong trend worldwide. It has significantly speeded up the establishment of new theories and new systems of teacher education in the world. A highly qualified teacher must not only have professional knowledge with appropriate moral conduct and passion, but also be able to learn and pursue new knowledge and skills throughout their lifetime.... These new teachers' roles require a fundamental change of the current system for teacher administration and teacher education.... We must seriously study the experiences and development trends of teacher education in other countries, examine the reality of teacher education in our country and promote the development of teacher education.

As one of the major strategies to promote the professionalization of teachers, the Chinese policymakers decided to adopt a licensing system for the teaching profession started in 1995. In the document on *the Ordinance of Teacher Qualification* (The State Council, 1995, December 12), it is mandated a licensing system be established to ensure that the teaching profession receive correspondent teacher education for schools at different levels. For example, the licensing system requires that all schoolteachers in high schools must receive a Bachelor's degree. This requirement is not a small deal, as during 1970s and the early 1980s, many teachers who taught in senior high schools only had a senior high school education, and junior high schools only with a junior high education. In 2000, the Ministry of Education promulgated *the Regulations of the Ordinance of Teacher Qualification* to enhance the implementation of the licensing system nationwide.

The review of teachers' new identities and teacher professionalization gives a comprehensive understanding of how the teaching profession and teacher education

have developed worldwide, and how these theories about teachers, and the worldwide movement of teacher professionalization, have impacted on the national policy of teacher education reform in China. It also delineates the limitations of the Western theories about teachers' roles and identities in the Chinese sociopolitical context. The next chapter will explore the theoretical frameworks and introduce a functional analytic model adopted for this case study.

CHAPTER 4

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND FUNCTIONAL ANALYTIC MODEL FOR THE STUDY

Policy analysis is usually viewed as “an applied social science discipline that employs multiple methods of inquiry, in contexts of argumentation and public debate, to create, critically assess, and communicate policy-relevant knowledge” (Dunn, 1994, pp. xiii-xiv). Multiple frameworks are employed to empower analysts to look into the policy making and implementation process. This chapter explores the theoretical frameworks which provide the general guidance for this case study. Meanwhile, it introduces an analytic model as the operational instrument with five variables for data collection, analysis and presentation of findings.

THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

A research framework is merely a simplified abstraction or representation of some aspects of the real world (Dye, 2002, p. 11). Ostrom (1999) clarifies the differences between frameworks and models for policy analysis. According to her, general frameworks help to

identify the elements and relationships among these elements that one needs to consider for institutional analysis. Frameworks organize diagnostic and

prescriptive inquiry. They provide the most general list of variables that should be used to analyze all types of institutional arrangements....thus, the elements contained in a framework help analysts generate the questions that need to be addressed when they first conduct an analysis....models make precise assumptions about a limited set of parameters and variables. Logic, mathematics, game theory, experimentation and simulation, and other means are used to explore systematically the consequences of these assumptions in a limited set of outcomes. (Ostrom, 1999, pp. 39-40)

Bearing Dye and Ostrom's definition and clarifications in mind, *this research views research frameworks more as general theoretical paradigms, and models more as operational analytic tools.*

Overview of Theoretical Frameworks for Policy Studies

It seems that there is never a shortage of research frameworks for policy studies in relevant literature (i.e., Dubnick & Bardes, 1983, p. 264; Lester & Stewart, 2000, pp. 36-42; Dye, 2002, pp. 11-29). Dubnick and Bardes (1983) classify five distinct research frameworks for policy analysts as: scientific; professional; political; administrative and personal (p. 264). Lester and Stewart (2000) lay out an array of nine specific research frameworks for policy analyses as the following:

1. Process Approach (to examine a part of the policy process);
2. Substantive Approach (to examine a substantive area);
3. Logical-positivist Approach (to examine the causes and consequences of policy using scientific methods);
4. Econometric Approach (to test economic theories);
5. Phenomenological (postpositivist) Approach (to analyze events through an intuitive process);
6. Participatory Approach (to examine the role of multiple actors in policymaking);
7. Normative or Prescriptive Approach (to prescribe policy to decision makers or others);
8. Ideological Approach (to analyze from a liberal or conservative point of view) and;

9. Historical Approach (to examine policy over time). (Lester & Stewart, 2000, pp. 36-42)

Dye (2002) further summarizes eight conceptual research frameworks for policy studies. These frameworks include:

1. Institutional Model (Policy as Institutional Output);
2. Process Model (Policy as Political Activity);
3. Rational Model (Policy as Maximum Social Gain);
4. Incremental Model (Policy as Variations on the Past);
5. Group Model (Policy as Group Equilibrium);
6. Elite Model (Policy as Elite Preference);
7. Public Choice Model (Policy as Collective Decision Making by Self-Interested Individuals), and;
8. Game Theory Model (Policy as Rational Choice in Competitive Situations). (Dye, 2002, pp. 11-29)

The research frameworks presented by different researchers suggest different theoretical paradigms for policy studies, but they also share similarities in many dimensions. In other words, they are sometimes independent, but most of the time they overlap with each other.

As introduced in Chapter One, public policy is widely accepted as “a purposeful course of action” advanced or authorized by higher institutional levels of the policy system in pursuit of influencing lower levels or units of the system (Fowler, 2000, p. 9). From this point of view, it holds at least two basic assumptions: 1) Public policy is a rational collective behavior aiming to achieve proposed policy goals and, 2) public policy is a conflicting political action redistributing scarce resources to satisfy certain groups. Among the miscellaneous models introduced above, the rational framework and the critical framework have long tradition in and profound impact on policy analysis including implementation studies.

The Rational Framework

The rational framework originates from classical models in economics. Rationality “refers to consistent, value-maximizing choice within specified constraints” (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 18), and assumes that human behavior, including policy implementation, is at least purposively rational. Further, Weberians hold that organizations are hierarchically structured based on the principle of legal rationality (Baldridge, Curtis, Ecker, & Riley, 1977, p. 9). From these perspectives, an actor is thought of as “a single individual or as a group functioning as a corporate actor” (Ostrom, 1999, p. 44), or in other words, as a unitary agent, who seeks to maximize policy outcomes. Allison and Zelikow (1999) write:

Governmental behavior can be most satisfactorily understood by analogy with the purposive acts of individuals....Treating national governments as if they were centrally coordinated, purposive individuals provides a useful shorthand for understanding policy choices and actions (p. 3).

Policy action is thus viewed, in their opinion, “as purposive, goal-directed activity” by a rational unified actor (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 17).

A number of central assumptions are embedded in the rational framework. First of all, a means-ends driven and goal directed principle, by which the cause-effect relationship is identified and linearly constructed, is practiced by actors and is evident throughout the policy process: “first the ends are isolated, then the means to achieve them are sought” (Lindblom, 1959, p. 81). Policy then “is cast as the instrumental means for achieving the stated ends” (Malen & Knapp, 1997, p. 423) and action is thus “chosen in response to the strategic situation the actor faces” (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 24). Beyond the means-ends driven and goal directed principle, the rational framework assumes the “cause-effect” link as the theories of action, which refer to

“the premises regarding how policy is formed and how it ‘works’ to produce effects” (Malen & Knapp, 1997, p. 420). Policy action is cast as the instrumental means to achieve the stated outcomes by identifying and eliminating the “causes” of substantial problems. In other words, theories of action can also serve as “a way to uncover and inspect the officially stated and logically related assumptions regarding the means-ends relationships” embodied in the policy (Malen, Croninger, Muncey & Redmond-Jones, 2002, p. 114). Moreover, values are embedded and evident in but not limited to the theories of action. Rather than ignored, emphasized or pursued, values are laden behind the theories of action.

Since the rational framework is characterized by the identification of substantial policy problems and “systematic, data-driven, ‘cost-benefit’ calculations of policy options” (Malen & Knapp, 1997, p. 423), comprehensive literature reviews, needs assessments, and causal analysis of policy problems are required, and information collection becomes extremely important. But a “partial ignorance” is tolerable (Kerr, 1976, p. 107), since there are always certain constraints in collecting available information.

In addition to the above assumptions, the rational framework holds implementation as one of stages in a linearly advanced policy process. To achieve the policy ends through means, an implementation process usually starts its linear journey with first identifying the substantial policy problems. Then, alternative strategies are considered, evaluated and compared. Optimal strategies as the most efficient choice are finally chosen to solve the substantial policy problems. Policy outcomes are evaluated, assessed and judged by the degree of consistency between the intended

resolutions “relative to a particular action” (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 17) and the originally identified substantial problems. There exist various theories about how a policy process is developed in distinct stages. For example, Sabatier and Mazmanian (1978) proposed a five-stage model (p. 26, as cited in Pressman & Wildavsky, 1984, p. 229; Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980, p. 542), and Heineman, Bluhm, Peterson and Kearny (1997) echoed with a three-stage model (pp. 54-60). Jenkins (1978) detailed a seven-stage rational model conceptualized initially by Harold Laswell as: initiation, information, consideration, decision, implementation, evaluation and termination (see Figure 4.1).

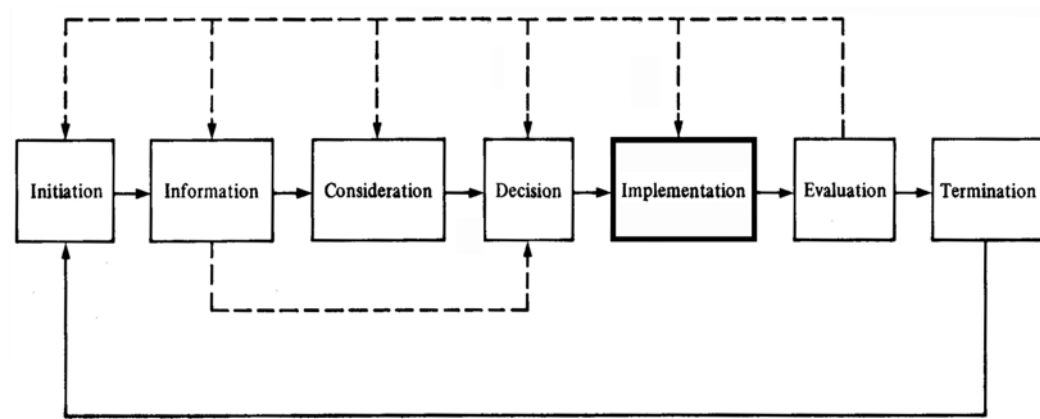


Figure 4.1 Linear Stages of Policy Process from the Rational perspective. Adapted from *Policy Analysis: A Political and Organisational Perspective* by W. I. Jenkins (1978), London: M. Robertson, p. 17.

The Jenkins’s rational model of policy process assumes that the following logical path exists in policy process:

Basically, it assumes that policy emerges via a logical path; an issue moves through the political system in a processual way from point of entry, through

decision and implementation, until a final choice is made to proceed with or terminate a course of action. (Jenkins, 1978, pp. 17-18)

Although this logical path is useful in dismantling the policy process for implementation studies, such a scheme is criticized as rather idealistic.

However, the rational framework also has its weakness in examination and explanation of policy implementation process for several reasons. Firstly, the rational framework disregards a basic element common to public policy implementation, e.g., organizations are political systems with various conflicting layers and actors. Regardless of how “scientifically” or “rationally” designed implementation action, where more than one administrative layers and actors are involved in the implementation process, the directives of authority are much more blurred, since most policies are usually practiced by one layer but formulated by another (Hill, 2003, p. 91). Secondly, the rational framework is based on normative recognition of implementation practice, and is designed to satisfy how organizations ought to function but not necessarily how they actually do. Thirdly, the rational framework fails to recognize that any policy implemented usually benefit some specific groups rather than the society as a whole. Lastly, information and costs and benefits for policy implementation are never accurately calculated due to uncertainties in policy action and its consequences. These weaknesses of the rational model call for alternative perspectives to broaden our understanding of the complicated implementation process of a public policy.

The Critical Framework

Public policy is never value-free and after all is a “dynamic and value-laden process through which a political system handles a public problem” (Fowler, 2000, p.

9). Since public policy is “a social and political activity” (Bardach, 2000, p. xiii), it is common that policy implementation process is studied from a political perspective (Brodtkin, 1990; Dye, 2002; Jenkins, 1978; Matland, 1995; Yanow, 1990). For example, Dardach argues that “the bargaining and maneuvering, the pulling and hauling, of the policy-adoption process carries over into the policy-implementation process” (1977, p. 38). Traditional research frameworks including rational model, however, are criticized as

grounded in a narrow, falsely objective, overly instrumental view of rationality that masks its latent biases and allows policy elites and technocrats to present analyses and plans as neutral and objective when they are actually tied to prevailing relations of power. (Schram, 1995, p. 375)

Since the late 1980s, critical policy analysis, coined by Bobrow and Dryzek in 1987 (1987, p. 169), has been used to address the constrained methods as well as partial and perverse understandings “from limited theoretical and political frameworks—greatly in need of dismantling” (Marshall, 1997, p. 3). Critical framework on implementation process, however, is still in its enfant stage.

Critical policy analysis examines the socio-political process by inquiring into “the nature of relationships in social systems, with the purposes of eliminating those relationships that maintain privilege and oppression” (Ryan, 2001, pp. 315-319). Grounded in the premise that “men and women are essentially unfree and inhabit a world rife with contradictions and asymmetries of power and privilege” (McLaren, 1998, p. 171), the critical theory strongly believes that it can be employed as a tool of reason by which the real world can be transformed and changed (Rasmussen, 1996, p. 11). Since it is particularly concerned “with issues of power and justice and the ways that the economy, matters of race, class, and gender, ideologies, discourses, education,

religion and other social institutions, and cultural dynamics interact to construct a social system” (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000, p. 281), the critical framework offers unique perspectives and applications for framing research questions, uncovering socially constructed reality, and looking for alternative interpretations in policy analysis.

The critical framework views policy process including implementation as a means to redistribute scarce social resources and transform conventional institutions so that the status quo of social inequality can be changed (Bensimon & Marshall, 1997, p. 10), for “class interests can become embedded in policy-making” (Ball, 2003, p. 46). In other words, public policy is one of the political struggles by which the oppressed or marginalized groups bargain and negotiate with, or fight against dominant or elite classes to achieve the freedom of humanity and “social justice” (Marshall & Gerstl-Pepin, 2005, pp. 70-72). Hypolito (2004) reports, for example, that the meaning of professionalization can vary depending on “who is using the word and under what circumstances,” and that the professionalization of teachers is “a process immersed in unequal relations of race, gender, and social class,” closely related to the process of proletarianization, feminization, and racial democracy.

More broadly, public policies are deemed to be “tied to the twin anchors of market and state” (Klees, 1999), and either market or state is, after all, a primary domain of political struggles. In this regard, the critical framework places at the center of policy analysis the power, institutions, and structures that restrict access, i.e., the equal interest and benefit of disadvantageous social groups or classes (Marshall, 1997, p. 9). In other words, examination of the systematically distorted unequal

access to power and benefits within institutional system becomes the prior task for the critical framework. Giroux (2001) further points policy analysts toward:

A mode of analysis that stresses the breaks, discontinuities, and tensions in history, all of which become valuable in that they highlight the centrality of human agency and struggle while simultaneously revealing the gap between society as it presently exists and society as it might be. (p. 36)

In the cases of the U.S. as well as other developed nations, education policies are aimed primarily at “satisfying the concerns and interests of the middle class” (Ball, 2003, p. 25), but those of minorities in terms of race, gender and socio-economic status, are disadvantaged, underrepresented or even oppressed. Possibilities and options for revealing and closing the gap between them become the major task for research using the critical framework.

The critical framework holds a number of important assumptions which overlap with political perspectives. First and foremost, policy action is a dynamic process of institutional transformation driven by various benefits and power relationships. Throughout the power-contested, benefit-based interactions, the reality of inequality in terms of race, gender and socio-economic status, becomes the terrain for problem identification. Critical policy analysis, from the viewpoint of Brobow and Dryzek (1987), becomes “an extremely ambitious undertaking, requiring nothing less than a wholesale reconstruction of political institutions and public life” (p. 181). The critical framework therefore stands as “a search for improvement of the human condition, an emancipatory social science” (Marshall, 1997, p. 10). From critical perspective, the purposes of policy aim to achieve “social justice”, by which class-, gender-, and race-based inequalities are resolved, instead of pursuing scientifically-planned rational goals, or retaining “institutional legitimacy” (Malen & Knapp, 1997, p. 428). For the

purposes of achieving social justice, policy strategies and priorities, implementation process, and theories of policy action are expected to change the unjust reality.

In the critical framework, political tensions and conflicts in the process of implementation are universal and pervasive in the “pulling and hauling” (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, pp. 304-305), or even fighting process, since policy players are “political creatures (a fact that too many policy analysts forget) in political communities” (Marshall, 1997, p. 5), which consist of various social groups or classes. They always try to influence the implementation process for their own special interests and values (Baldrige et al., 1977, p. 14; 1983, p. 51). From policy planning, implementation, to policy outcome and evaluation, interest groups, especially marginalized/underrepresented individuals or groups, fight against the status quo and strive for their social/economic status change. Given that neutrality is abandoned, values “create the power that drives choices” and provide an important template for implementation (Marshall, 1997, p. 5).

From the critical framework, policy problems are identified as to how privilege is maintained, and how the disempowered and silenced are kept that way, raising “serious questions about the role of schools in the social and cultural reproduction of social classes, gender roles, and racial and ethnic prejudice” (Anderson, 1989, p. 251). Problems are considered as being resolved if the political tensions and conflicts are eliminated, and the social status of disadvantaged groups is promoted to a certain acceptable extent in the implementation process. Information plays an important role as “the medium of exchange” (Marshall, 1997, p. 5), in terms of distributing power, compromising conflict, alleviating pressure, fighting for benefits, and taking

responsibilities.

In addition to the above assumptions, the critical framework views implementation process as a political arena converged a system with its environment. Jenkins (1978) argues that “public policy is best understood by considering the operation of a political system in its environment and by examining how such a system maintains itself and changes over time.” He thus simplifies variables to look into policy process are (a) the policy environment and (b) the political system (p. 21). Jenkins’s argument warns this research to pay serious attention to the role of institutional characteristics and sociopolitical influences in policy implementation.

Rationale for the Selection of the Rational and Critical Frameworks

At this point I have developed two alternative frameworks for implementation studies in general and for this study in particular. It is necessary to justify why this research selects the rational and critical frameworks.

Dror (1984) recommends nine general guidelines for better policy analysts as gaining historical and comparative perspective, knowing policymaking realities, and studying analyst’s own society in depth, multiplying analyst’s disciplinary bases, etc. (pp. 13-18). Dye (2002) sets forth six general criteria for evaluating the usefulness of an operational framework. Basically it needs to

- a) order and simplify reality;
- b) identify what is significant;
- c) be congruent with reality;
- d) provide meaningful communication;
- e) direct inquiry and research, and;
- f) suggest explanations. (pp. 29-30).

Central to these guidelines and criteria is a basic understanding of policy process and relationships in a specific sociopolitical context, and the appropriateness of modeling for a specific policy analysis. They inspired me to think about four reasons about why the rational and critical frameworks are adopted for this research.

First, a research framework must be selected to match the purpose of my research. As introduced in Chapter One, this study looks into the extremely complicated implementation process of China's teacher education reform since the 1990s. It has been designed to investigate and understand how a higher teacher education institution has responded to the national policy of teacher education reform. One major task is to explore how the teacher education policy was actually implemented in a higher teacher education institution. To accomplish this task, an in-depth examination on the linearly developed but fiercely contested implementation process of China's teacher education reform is required. The rational and critical frameworks allow me to focus on these dimensions of the implementation process.

Second, a research framework must be selected to match the unique implementation reality in China's societal context with which I am familiar. The national policy of teacher education reform and its implementation in China have been guided by a strong scientific orientation for the nation's modernization drive, as stated repeatedly in China's national policy documents (please recall "Analysis on Major Policy Documents" in Chapter Two). The rational framework is adopted because it serves as a powerful lens for me to look into the rational implementation process of the China case. In addition, although China has a long history of centralized control, the implementation of the national policy of teacher education

reform is still a dynamic process of institutional transformation with significant levels of power conflicts. The critical framework allows this study to address the conflicting interests of stakeholders in the implementation process.

Third, China's reform of teacher education since the 1990s is a large-scale, complex national policy action that lasts over one decade. Any single lens is unable to comprehensively uncover the complexity of the implementation process. Because the rational and critical frameworks help unearth "aspects and intricacies of policy that would be easily missed with a single lens look" (Malen & Knapp, 1997, p. 435), rational and critical frameworks together offer a richer and fuller understanding of the implementation process. The rational and critical frameworks will empower this research with various concepts, notions, and assumptions toward understanding the implementation process of the national policy. In addition, one framework may bring in more meaningful insights for looking into some aspects of the implementation process than another.

But to say that no single model is able to adequately capture the full complexities of implementation process, is not necessarily to say that the more analytic models one has the better a policy study will be. Relevance of the frameworks, time constraints, manageability of the tasks of research, need to be balanced. With these concerns in mind, I believe that the rational and critical frameworks best balance the need of this study.

THE FUNCTIONAL ANALYTIC MODEL FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION STUDY

The rational and critical frameworks offer a starting point for this study to explore the implementation process of China's teacher education reform. Yet, a functional analytic model helps establish analytic components for this study to functionally address the research questions with the selected research frameworks.

The Exploration of Functional Analytic Models

Policy implementation process varies from case to case and from time to time, depending on the nature of the policy to be carried out. Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) proposed a two-dimension model to look into factors that affect policy implementation (see Figure 4.2). The two dimensions they classified are the amount of change involved and the extent to which there is goal consensus among the participants in the implementation process.

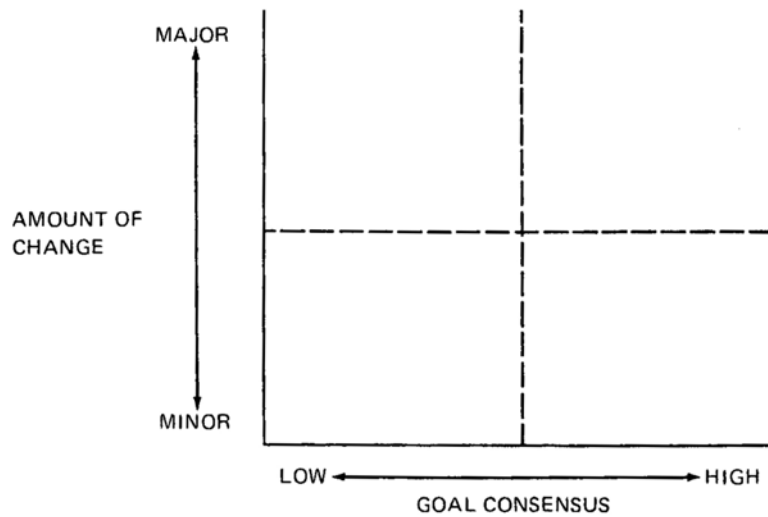
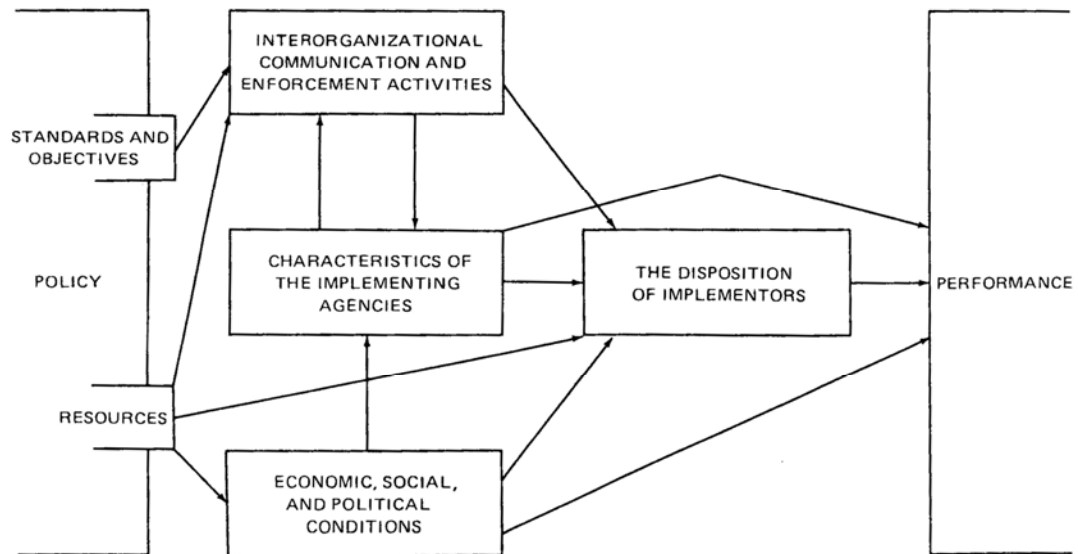


Figure 4.2 Dimensions of Policy Affecting Implementation. From “The policy implementation process: A conceptual framework,” by D. S. Van Meter and C. E. Van Horn, 1975, *Administration and Society*, 6 (4), p. 460.

Figure 4.2 illustrates that the amount of change set by policy goals and the extent to which implementers hold consensus on such policy goals affect how effective an implementation process is (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975, p. 461). With these hypotheses in mind, Van Meter and Van Horn propose a systems model involving a complicated set of variables in the implementation process, as shown in Figure 4.3.



*Figure 4.3 A Systems Model of the Policy Implementation Process. Adapted from “The policy implementation process: A conceptual framework,” by D. S. Van Meter and C. E. Van Horn, 1975, *Administration and Society*, 6 (4), p. 463.*

As shown in Figure 4.3, Van Meter and Van Horn’s model has six factors or independent variables affecting the implementation process as following:

- a. Policy standards and objectives;
- b. Policy resources;
- c. Interorganizational communication and enforcement activities;
- d. Characteristics of the implementing agencies;
- e. Economic, social, and political conditions, and;
- f. Disposition of implementers.

In this model, the researchers pay much attention to the linkages between individual components involved in the implementation process. For example, the model views that standards and objectives exert indirect impact on the disposition of implementers through interorganizational communication activities (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975, p. 474).

Van Meter and Van Horn's systems model was criticized by Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) for having narrowly defined implementation process and its unlikeliness to be of much use to policy practitioners due to the traditional defects of abstract systems models (p. 540). Sabatier and Mazmanian instead propose an alternative map for looking into the implementation components from a top-down approach (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1983; Sabatier, 1986; Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980). They group seventeen independent variables affecting the achievement of policy objectives into three broad categories: the tractability or manageability of the problem being addressed by policy; the ability of the policy to favorably structure and control implementation process; and the political/environmental effects on the implementation process. Sabatier and Mazmanian's model is supported by Browne and Wildavsky (1983, p. 229), but Hill and Hupe (2002) contends that it is the interactions between these variables and the efforts to coordinates the implementation process that may be crucial for the implementation process (pp. 49-55).

The above two analytic models developed by Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) and Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) are both from a predominantly top-down or forward mapping perspective. Although the top-down perspective is powerful in explaining how an implementation process is affected by a downward flow of policy process, the top-down perspective has been criticized as that it overemphasizes the ability of policy proponents to structure implementation while ignores the ability of policy opponents to interfere in this structuring process. Further, it neglects the influence the front-line staff and field workers have on the delivery of policies, and the disability of politicians and administrators to control the implementation process

(Winter, 2003, pp. 213-214).

A bottom-up or backward mapping perspective is therefore also required for this study, since its purpose is to look into how a higher teacher education institution has responded to the national policy of teacher education reform. From a bottom-up perspective, Elmore (1978) developed four organizational models for examining the implementation process:

- a. Systems management model;
- b. Bureaucratic process model;
- c. Organizational development model, and;
- d. Conflict and bargaining model.

Of them, the systems management model and the conflict and bargaining model fall into the primary interest of this study.

The *systems management model* captures the rationalist tradition of policy analysis. In this model, organizations should be structured on the principle of hierarchical control and operate as “rational value maximizers”. Implementation consists of defining a detailed set of objectives, assigning responsibilities and performance standards to subunits. It is considered as effective when central goals and objectives are maximally achieved, but is considered a failure if it is featured by poorly defined policy goals, unclearly assigned responsibilities, and uncompleted purposive outcomes. In other words, the success or failure of an implementation is judged by “observing the discrepancy between the policy declaration and subordinate behavior” (Elmore, 1978, p. 195).

The *conflict and bargaining model* addresses how people with individual interests coalesce in a conflicting implementation process. Organizations are political

arena of conflict in which individuals or interest groups compete for public resources. Implementation is considered as a dynamic process in which the distribution of power is never totally equal. Interdependency exists in implementation process, and there is a tacit consensus among all parties that is not enormously destructive to all sides. The success or failure of the implementation process can only be judged relatively to the social justice goal temporarily achieved in the bargaining and conflicting process. Local implementers usually adopt policy goals and strategies to enforce state policies in part with compliance and in part with countermeasures.

Elmore's two specific models for implementation studies along with the previously introduced models advocated by Van Meter, Van Horn, Sabatier and Mazmanian, together shed inspiring light for this study to build up a functional analytic model.

Firstly, implementation and policy are an interwoven process by which policy goals are associated with politic outcomes, responding to sociopolitical changes. The implementation process needs to be viewed as either a rational collectively unitary activity from the rational framework, or political conflicts from the critical framework.

Secondly, as the purpose of this study is to explore interpretations on how a higher teacher education institution has responded to the national policy of China's teacher education reform since the 1990s, the roles of stakeholders and their understanding and perceptions on the implementation process need to be studied carefully for understanding the implementation process.

Thirdly, combined with a top-down perspective, a bottom-up perspective is imperative for this study to reveal these individual interpretations on the sophisticated

implementation process.

Finally, although some major variables are adopted or adapted from the aforementioned models to address the success or failure of an implementation process, this study is not to be seen as an evaluation of the implementation process. Instead, it is a descriptive research offering interpretations on how a nationwide policy has been implemented by a single provincial university.

The Operational Analytic Map and Analytic Variables for This Study

Bearing in mind the above contemplations, the functional analytic model adopted by this study is sketched in Figure 4.4. This functional analytic model adopts some major components from Van Meter and Van Horn's system model of the policy implementation process, such as institutional objectives, communication, and sociopolitical influences, etc. But the one I have constructed also differs significantly from it.

Compared with Van Meter and Van Horn's system model illustrated by Figure 4.3, the functional analytic model for this study draws components from the rational and critical perspectives, therefore pays more attention to policy strategies, policy delivery and communication, policy actors' attitudes and involvement, evaluations, and challenges. It also directs more attention to the confluence of various educational reform policies within rapid reconstruction and changes of higher teacher education institutions in China. These components enable this study to look into the institutional adverse factors in and barriers to the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform, such as the intersection of the national policy of teacher education reform with the policy for higher education expansion, the national undergraduate

teaching assessment, and the national college entrance examination, etc. Furthermore, the functional analytic model differentiates the dissimilar roles the implementers and participants play, thus helps us better understand the dynamic process of implementation. In this sense, the functional analytic model differs from Van Meter and Van Horn's system model significantly.

In addition, neither Jenkins (1978), nor Van Meter and Van Horn (1975), nor Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980), pay much attention to the role of traditional culture in implementation process. The functional analytic model adopted by this study includes traditional cultural influence as an important indicator since China has a heavy tradition of central governance over thousands of years and the significance of this study relies in part on its discovery of how traditional Chinese culture contributes to the implementation process. It must be also noted that the national policy of teacher education reform in China since the 1990s is an ultra large-scale and extremely complicated societal reconstruction. The reality of the implementation process may be much more sophisticated than it can be captured in this analytic map.

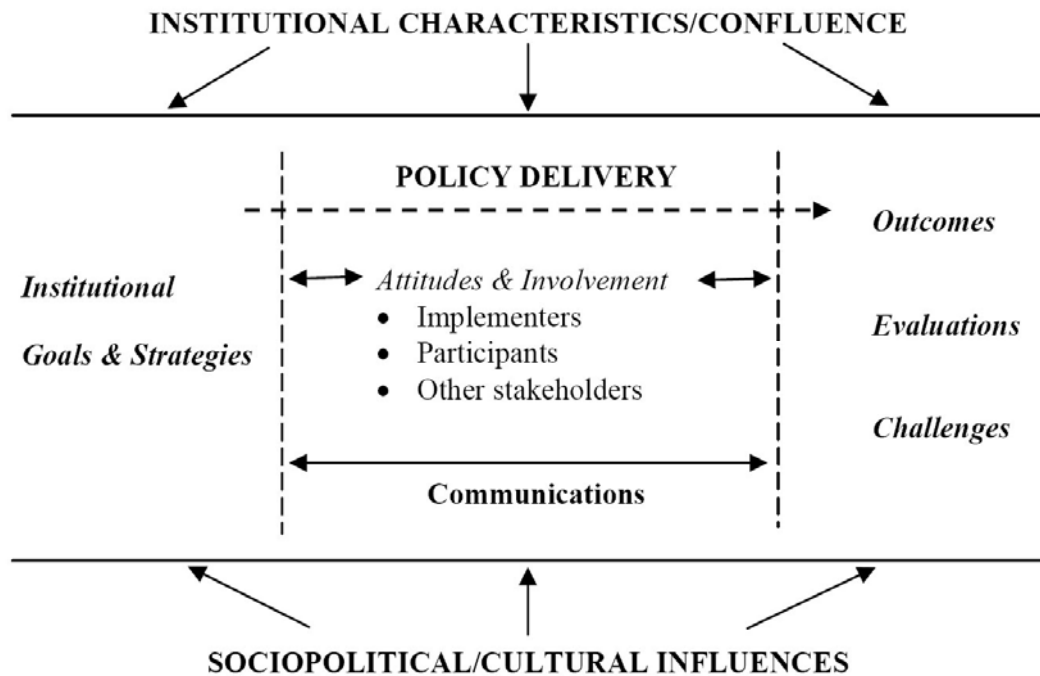


Figure 4.4 The Operational Analytic Map for the Study of the Implementation Process of China's Teacher Education Reform. This model has adopted some components from "The policy implementation process: A conceptual framework," by D. S. Van Meter and C. E. Van Horn, 1975, *Administration and Society*, 6 (4), p. 463.

Based on the above operational analytic map, five major variables are identified as the focus of this research: 1) Policy delivery and communication in the implementation; 2) institutional goals and strategies of the implementation; 3) involvement and participation in the implementation process; 4) outcomes and evaluations of the implementation; and 5) institutional barriers and stakeholder's attitudes to the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform.

Policy Delivery and Communications in the Implementation Process

How a public policy is delivered is a fundamental issue in policy studies that

many policy analysts have addressed (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1978, p. 26, as cited in Pressman & Wildavsky, 1984, p. 229; Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980, p. 542). For example, Jenkins deems that there is a logical path by which policy is initiated, implemented and terminated (1978, pp. 17-18). An examination of policy delivery and communication is therefore very important for us to understand the policy implementation process. Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) articulate that effective implementation usually requires policy goals to be clearly understood by implementers: “It is vital that we concern ourselves with the clarity of standards and objectives, the accuracy of their communication to implementors, and the consistency (or uniformity) with which they are communicated by various sources of information” (p. 466). That means that communication plays a key role in the process of policy delivery.

The first unit of analysis adopted by this study is the policy delivery structure and the communication channels for the implementation. It looks into how the national policy of teacher education reform is delivered to/within a teacher education institution. It also examines by what communication strategies the national policy is mapped forward to local implementation institutions and how stakeholders are kept informed.

Institutional Goals and Strategies for the Implementation of the Policy

The implementation process may vary from one to another, but the success or failure of an implementation process is commonly studied by examining the consistency between policy goals and outcomes (Elmore, 1978, p. 195; Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980, p. 542; Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975, p. 459). As Van Meter and

Van Horn (1975) articulate, “Essentially, the performance indicators assess the extent to which the policy’s standards and objectives are realized” (pp. 463-464). In addition, institutional strategies are also important because they control in what ways the policy is to be carried out in the implementation process.

This study adopts institutional goals and strategies for the policy implementation as the second unit of analysis. The institutional goals put forward the implementation tasks, and the institutional strategies are adopted as a result to achieve implementation goals. In this study, the institutional mission set the ultimate goals which orient the development and reform of the university toward meeting the goal of the national policy of teacher education. The institutional strategies vary from enhancing teaching for prospective teachers, to strengthening the distinguishing feature of teacher education, and to restructuring academic departments.

Involvement and Participation in the Implementation Process

As I have mentioned, the implementation process can be viewed as either a rational unitary activity from the rational framework or a fiercely conflicting political arena from the critical framework. Both perspectives view implementation as a process involving an intensive and extensive participation and engagement by various stakeholders. This variable looks into how the implementers (leaders/administrators) and participants (faculty) are involved participated in the implementation process.

Elmore (1978) argues that implementer’s role is a crucial factor affecting the implementation process, citing the implementation of federal educational programs as a best example:

Local implementors designed their actions around expectations about the willingness of federal administrators to enforce the policy. When federal administrators were forced to take a different posture, local administrators responded in part with compliance and in part with counterpressure. (p. 224)

In addition, Winter (1990) argue that the implementation process is very much affected by the way in which the street-level bureaucrats and target-groups (implementers/participants) respond to the policy (pp. 31-35). Termed by Lipsky (1980), street-level bureaucrats occupy a uniquely influential position in the implementation process (Meyers & Vorsanger, 2003, p. 245). By focusing on collective and individual roles of implementers/participants, we are able to examine how the national policy is “rationally” carried out but “politically” conflicted in the implementation process.

Policy Outcomes and Evaluations of the Implementation

Policy outcomes are usually measured in an evaluation process which examines the consistency of policy objectives and output from a rational framework. Policy outcomes are also judged relatively by the social justice goals temporarily achieved in the bargaining and conflicting process from a critical framework. Regardless of the perspective people adopted, evaluation is considered widely as a crucial stage in the implementation process. Browne and Wildavsky (1983) commit a whole chapter in their classical book *Implementation*, discussing the role of evaluation in the implementation process (pp. 181-205). In their theory, evaluation “can contribute to a continuing refinement in comprehension of why programs and policies do or do not work,” and “evaluation is a necessary component of program development and implementation” (Browne & Wildavsky, 1983, p. 182; p. 201).

The outcomes and evaluations as a unit of analysis in this study focused on

these aspects:

- Institutional changes in the implementation process;
- Official evaluations and personal accounts on the outcomes of the implementation process.

The first aspect addresses institutional changes brought about by the implementation in terms of the change of power relations and social status. The second aspect reveals perspectives from formal and informal channels which present divergent views on the results from the implementation process.

Stakeholder's Attitudes and Institutional Confluence in the Implementation

Many policy theorists have paid great attention to stakeholder's understanding and attitudes toward a policy action. For example, Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) argue that "attitudes and resources of constituency groups" are one of their six nonstatutory variables affecting the implementation process (pp. 550-551). In Van Meter and Van Horn's systems model (Figure 4.4), the disposition of implementers is critical for policies to be effectively delivered since all other components must be filtered through the perceptions of the implementers. From their view, three elements of the implementers' response have great impact on their ability and willingness to carry out the policy. The three elements include their cognition (comprehension, understanding) of the policy, the direction of their response toward it (acceptance, neutrality, rejection), and the intensity of that response (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975, p. 472).

This study adopts stakeholder's attitudes as a unit of analysis to investigate how the administrators and faculty understand the new identities of teachers and the national policy, and what attitudes they have held toward the implementation of the

national policy of teacher education reform.

In addition to stakeholder's attitudes, institutional confluence, e.g., institutional adverse factors and barriers presents in the implementation process are also key issues in policy studies. Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) see policy outcomes technically as a dependent variable which provides feedbacks for major policy revision (p. 542). In this sense, problems and challenges to the implementation are simultaneously estimated for further policy action in the future. Additionally, the identification of the institutional adverse factors and confluence of other national policies in the implementation process has specific significance for this study, since it is to serve "as an instrument to identify hidden policy problems neglected by policymakers in the planning stage," as stated in Chapter One. In this senses, this study scrutinizes the institutional barriers that hamper the implementation of the national policy.

The rational and critical models guide this study to explore the major dimensions of the implementation process of the national policy from two divergent theoretical paradigms. The functional analytic model introduced serves to facilitate this study to limit its key units of analysis and the practical operation of the inquiry. The next chapter will address how this case study is designed and carried out in the field.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND FIELD WORK

In order to better understand the implementation process of teacher education reform in China, this study employs case study as its primary methodology approach to investigate how a higher teacher education institution in China implemented the national policy of teacher education reform since the 1990s.

This chapter first gives reasons as to why the case study approach is used in this study. It introduces how the university for the case study was selected, how the researcher gain access to the site, and how the interviewees were identified, following the strict requirements of qualitative research. The chapter details my field trip to the case for data collection and how the data were analyzed with validity and ethical considerations.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Case study is widely accepted as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2003, p.

13). Although generalization of findings is not the primary purpose of this study, this case study will help understand “a larger class of (similar) units” (Gerring, 2004, p. 342), that is, how the national policy of teacher education reform has been implemented in teacher education institutions in China since the 1990s.

The case study approach is adopted for several specific reasons. First, there is a tradition that the case study approach has been intensively employed by implementation studies, as Goggin, Bowman, Lester and O’Toole, Jr. (1990) conclude: “Systematically studying the dynamics of implementation is a particularly difficult task. Until recently, most implementation research relied heavily on the case study method to capture the dynamics of implementation” (p. 182). This is mostly because the case study approach explores “the realities of implementation” (Fox, 1990, p. 210).

The implementation process of China’s national policy of teacher education reform is a highly complicated process embedded deeply in its societal context. The case study approach seeks to examine phenomenon in its “important circumstances” (Stake, 1995, p. xi). The case study approach helps better understand the implementation process of the policy within its Chinese social context.

The case study approach can serve as a powerful tool to answer “how” or/and “why” questions (Yin, 2003, p. 9). It is well suited to the research interest of this study, since I intend to look for answers for *how* the policy of teacher education reform has been implemented in the Chinese context.

Finally, I believe that sometimes knowing more about less is much more important than knowing less about more. This is particularly meaningful for this

qualitative research. The case study approach has the virtue of offering “the depth of analysis” (Gerring, 2004, p. 348), and even “thick description” as coined by Gilbert Ryle (Geertz, 1973, p. 6). To fulfill its major goal, this study seeks rich descriptions and interpretations for the implementation process of the policy which can be satisfied through the case study approach.

SAMPLING AND ACCESS

A good policy researcher should know policymaking realities and study her/his own society in depth (Dror, 1984, p. 13-14). Dror’s suggestion makes particular sense to this study, in terms of making appropriate decision on the selection of research site, cases and informants. The following section will detail how this study selected its research site, case and informants. In other words, how I selected a provincial normal university and why it was this one. Subsequently, how I identified possible interviewees from the case.

Selection of Site and Case

For a case study like the present research, sampling techniques of case and interviewing are crucial for fulfilling its research purpose. Sampling techniques known as probability sampling and purposive sampling are interchangeably used nowadays for quantitative or qualitative studies (Kemper, Stringfield, & Teddlie, 2003, p. 277). Silverman (2001) assumes that purposive sampling “allows us to choose a case because it illustrates some feature or process in which we are interested” (p. 250). Specifically, Patton (2002) postulates:

The logic and power of purposeful sampling lie in selecting *information-rich cases* for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry. (p. 230)

Since this study looked for in-depth descriptive interpretations for the sophisticated implementation process of China's national reform of teacher education, it adopted the purposeful sampling technique with multiple strategies for the selection of interviewees. Specifically, it applied Patton's typical-case sampling approach to capture the local circumstances and conditions of an everyday or commonplace situation in China. Through using a typical-case sampling approach, the vital statistical characteristics of provincial normal universities were reviewed to identify "average-like" case (Patton, 2002, p. 236). One *representative* or *typical* provincial normal university was thus purposively chosen as the case for this study, for provincial normal universities provided the largest base for teacher education in China.

By *representative* or *typical*, it refers to a case that allows for a commonplace understanding of the implementation process of the teacher education reform in China. As a result, the site of the case was limited to a medium-sized city in mid-level-developed province in inland China. Since GDP (gross domestic product) and GNI (gross national income) are usually used by economists as the cardinal indicators for measuring the socioeconomic development of a country (Ahuja, 1999, p. 13), the gross regional product (GRP) and per capita net income of households were used likewise by this study to measure the socioeconomic development of a region. By the mid-level-developed province, this study refers to provinces which GRP ranged in the middle of the 27 selected provinces/autonomous regions/municipalities directly under

the Central Government.¹⁵

Similarly, the case was carefully limited to a provincial normal university due to the limited time the researcher had for field work. Generally, the number of student enrolled, with the number of faculty, and that of collected books in university libraries, are considered as key indicators referring to the developmental level of a university. By mid-level-developed provincial normal university, this study defines that its enrollment of undergraduates fall into the middle range of the 27 selected provincial normal universities.

Based on the above criteria, the province of Yangtze was selected as the site and Yangtze Normal University as the case for this study. Several reasons were behind this decision. First, the GRP of Yangtze province ranked in the middle of national economic and social development among the 27 provinces/autonomous regions/municipalities directly under the Central Government, and the enrollment of Yangtze Normal University also ranked in the middle of the 27 provincial normal universities selected. Second, this study only allowed the researcher limited time for field work back to China, and one university was large enough for the researcher to collect sufficient data within a constrained timeframe. Third, Yangtze Normal University shared similar administrative system and organizational missions with

¹⁵ The ranges are defined by an interval of GRP less than ¥399.9 billion Yuan (RMB), between ¥400.00-999.9 billion Yuan, and above ¥1,000.0 billion Yuan, based on China Statistical Yearbook 2005 (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2005, p. 347; p. 361). Twenty seven provinces/autonomous regions/municipalities directly under the Central Government were selected for comparison for only the 27 provincial normal universities had available statistics for analysis. Mainland China has currently 31 provinces/autonomous regions/municipalities directly under the Central Government. The excluded four provinces/autonomous regions, i.e., Hubei province, Shaanxi province, autonomous regions of Tibet and Ningxia, either do not have a provincial normal university or only have a merged national key normal university.

most normal universities in China. For example, it was directly administered under the provincial department of education, monitored by the MOE, and primarily aimed at pre-service training for teachers. In this sense, it qualified as a *representative* or *typical* case for this study.

Identification of Interviewees

As mentioned previously, the purposeful sampling technique was adopted by this study with multiple strategies for identifying possible informants. The multiple strategies included convenience sampling, opportunistic sampling, snowball sampling, and critical case sampling (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2002, pp. 179-181; Mertens, 1998, pp. 261-265; Patton, 2002, pp. 237-242). Convenience sampling allows the study to target samples that are easily accessible and finds a lot of applications in the field of educational research, but its disadvantage is obvious: the easily accessed samples might not be the appropriate ones. This disadvantage can be minimized in this study because the researcher clearly knows about the case on the site and those as key informants who have in fact been involved in the implementation process. This study also use opportunistic sampling and snowball sampling which both involve taking “advantage of circumstances and events as they arise while undergoing the data collection process,” and which “use insider knowledge to maximize the chance that the units included in the final sample are strong (highly appropriate) cases to include in the study” (Kemper et al., 2003, p. 283). In addition, this study adopted the critical case sampling strategy for it makes strategic sense to pick informants who would yield the most information and have the greatest impact on the development of knowledge. Patton (2002) defines critical cases (informants) as

those that can make a point quite dramatically or are, for some reason, particularly important in the scheme of things. A clue to the existence of a critical case is a statement to the effect that “if it happens there, it will happen anywhere,” or, vice versa.... While studying one or a few critical cases does not technically permit broad generalizations to all possible cases, *logical generalizations* can often be made from the weight of evidence produced in studying a single, critical case. (pp. 236-237)

Critical case sampling strategy was particularly well-suited for this study to identify possible interviewees. As the administrators and faculty at the College of Education of normal universities were much more impacted by, and have to be much more responsive to the national policy of teacher education reform, most of the interviewees were identified in the College of Education of Yangtze Normal University.

To comprehensively examine the implementation process in Yangtze Normal University, interviewees were stratified to cover three levels (university/college/department) with two major groups of stakeholders, i.e., implementers (leaders/administrative officers) and participants (faculty members).

All the informants graduated from the Department of Educational Science in Yangtze Normal University, although some of them used to work or by the time interviewed were working outside of the Department/College of Educational Science as university administrators such as assistant president, director of the Office of Scientific Research.

Five key informants were identified for this study, since they “are particularly knowledgeable about the inquiry setting and articulate about their knowledge—people whose insights can prove particularly useful in helping an observer understand what is happening and why” (Patton, 2002, p. 321). As shown in Table 5.2, the five

key informants with special involvement and knowledge of the implementation process included two assistant deans of the College of Educational Science and a department chair, and two faculty members in the Department of Educational Science.

A total of 17 interviewees were successfully recruited from the College of Educational Science at Yangtze Normal University. Among the 17 interviewees, as shown in Table 5.1, nearly two-third were university/college leaders/administrators such as an assistant president of the university, dean and assistant deans of the college, and department chairs, etc. More than one-third were professors of education, and near one-fifth were females. I deliberately recruited more administrators than faculty because the nature of this study probes into the implementation process and university administrators were generally more involved in the implementation process.

Table 5.1

Statistics of Informants

Categories		Number (Gender Distribution)	Percentage
I	Implementers (Administrators)	11 (M: 9/F: 2)	65%
	Participants (Faculty Members)	6 (M: 5/F: 1)	35%
II	Informal Interviews	2 (M: 2/F: 0)	12%
	Formal Interviews	15 (M: 12/F: 3)	88%
III	Individual Interviews	13 (M: 12/F: 1)	76%
	Focus Group Interviews	4 (M: 2/F: 2)	24%
IV	Male Interviewees	14	82%
	Female Interviewees	3	18%
Total		17 (M: 14/F: 3)	100%

Note. The total number of informants and percentage is calculated based on each category, respectively.

Table 5.2

Profiles of Informants

Category	Pseudonym	Title	Gender	Age Range
Leaders/ Administrators (Implementers)	Anping	Department Chair/ Associate Professor	M	41-45
	Beihua *	Department Chair/ Associate Professor	M	41-45
	Caifei	Department Associate Chair/Professor	M	66-70
	Daijing	Department Associate Chair/Associate Professor	F	66-70
	Enwei *	College Associate Dean/Professor	M	41-45
	Futang	Institute Director/ Associate Professor	M	46-50
	Gangyang	Office Director/Professor	M	41-45
	Hengtang *	College Assistant Dean/Professor	M	51-55
	Inling	Department Chair/ Associate Professor	F	36-40
	Jiqiang	University Vice President/Professor	M	66-70
	Kaiyue	College Dean/Professor	M	41-45
Faculty (Participants)	Laimin	Associate Professor	M	41-45
	Mawei	Associate Professor	M	71-75
	Ningdong *	Associate Professor	M	36-40
	Ouying	Associate Professor	F	41-45
	Peishi *	Associate Professor	M	41-45
	Quguo	Associate Professor	M	41-45

Note. Pseudonym marked with * are key informants.

The above sampling strategies enabled this study to recruit samples which are highly relevant to the study. It enables the researcher to deliberately examine samples that are critical for the frameworks by which the research is developed, and to establish particular comparisons to illuminate the reasons for commonalities and differences between interviewees and individual groups.

Access

As to access to the research site, case and informants, I have some advantages because of my social networks in the academic community previously established in China. I graduated in the field of education from a provincial key normal university and have worked as a faculty member in this field in a prestigious national key normal university for more than one decade. As a quasi-insider of the system, I am very familiar with the site and case. In addition, I have many former classmates and colleagues in the field of education who are currently working in China's teacher education systems as deans, directors, or leading professors. They helped me to obtain easy and convenient access to the site selected. More importantly, many of them later became my key interviewees since an intimate and trust relationship has been established between us for over the decades. Therefore, there was no problem at all for me to gain access to the research site.

FIELD WORK FOR DATA COLLECTION

Data collection primarily consists of, but is not limited to, interviews, for the interview is generally regarded as “one of the most important sources of case study information” (Yin, 2003, p. 89). At the same time, documentation and archival records provided other important data sources for this study.

Collection of Interview Data

Interviews allowed me to collect data based on individual observations, personal perspectives and the informants' involvements of the implementation process. This type of data was obviously not obtainable by questionnaire surveys. To better collect interview data, I adopted a common-sense hypothetico-inductivist model popularized by Wengraf in his *Qualitative Research Interview* (2001, p. 2). Adapted from the tradition of grounded theory, the common-sense hypothetico-inductivist model collects "all the relevant facts" in order to build up possible theory induced from the relevant facts (Wengraf, 2001, p. 2). Wengraf (2001) recommends four principles for a depth interviewing as research-oriented, a face-to-face interactive conversation, semi-structured and going into matters in depth (p. 3-6). As I expected "thick description" for this study, the four principles were therefore rigorously observed in the process of data collection. For example, an intensive interviewing strategy was applied (Murphy, 1980, pp. 75-78), and all the interview questions focused on my topic-oriented sub-questions were designed to be sufficiently open-ended, semi-structured, flexible and improvisatory, as suggested by Wengraf (2001, p. 5).

By the late August of 2005, I have closely communicated with some key informants on the site via phone and email for the preparation of my field work. Before I began to interview my 17 informants, a one hour of "routine" pilot interview or "rehearsal" as recommended by Stake (1995, p. 65), was conducted with an additional informant on site to test my interview guide and procedures. The completed interview process involved a combination of Patton's three basic

approaches for open-ended interviews, i.e., the informal conversational interview, the general interview guide, and the standardized open-ended interview. The informal conversational interview offers maximum flexibility in the natural flow of an interaction “to pursue information in whatever direction appears to be appropriate” (Patton, 2002, p. 342). The general interview guide approach makes sure that all relevant topics are covered with limited time available during an interview, whereas the standardized open-ended interview approach conversely interacts with interviewees with carefully worded questions and rigidly ordered procedures to minimize variation in interviewing (Patton, 2002, pp. 341-348).

Among the 17 informants, two were interviewed informally due to their sensitive administrative positions. All the rest of 15 informants were interviewed by first outlining the interview questions and then asking each respondent the same worded questions with similar sequence based on the interview guide. All the formal interviews were conducted face-to-face in a safe, quiet, friendly and comfortable hotel room located on the campus. Except for two informal interviews, all interviews were audio-recorded based on participant’s consent. The consent form was distributed to participants for their signature before the interview begins. The oral consents were also obtained from the two interviews conducted informally.

To avoid the failure of audio-recording, a mini tape recorder and a mini digital MP3 recorder were used simultaneously with multiple microphones for each informant and interviewer. The final audio-data were in MP3 format and saved on my home desktop. In addition, written notes were taken and reviewed for each interview on my interview guide in the evening of the same day.

Collection of Documents

The documents and archived records included anything that has some relevance to the case (Bardach, 2000, p. 50): Books, journal articles, newspapers and magazines, official reports, statistical archives, interoffice memoranda, position papers, bulletins, and so on. These data sources are recommended by such experienced researchers as Murphy (1980, pp. 121-128) and Yin (2003, pp. 85-89). Murphy argues that “document analysis is better than interviewing for collecting some kinds of retrospective data” (1980, p. 121), and Yin recommends that “the most important use of documents is to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources” (2003, p. 87). Apart from the firsthand data collection of interviews, this study extensively collected and analyzed various documents and archival records about the implementation process. For example, I gleaned many key policy documents or event archives which were highly relevant to the implementation process in Yangtze Normal University. These documents and archives included *the Yangtze Normal University Strategic Plan for Eleventh Five-year and for 2015*, *the University Newspaper*, *the Yangtze Normal University Gazette* and *the Yangtze Normal University Newsletter of Teaching*, etc. These documents and archival records helped this study build up a comprehensive understanding of the case with accurate retrospective data for major actions and events of the implementation in Yangtze Normal University.

DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis of primary data began immediately after an interview was conducted on site. After I came back from the field trip, I spent much time transcribing myself the written notes and audio-recording. The decision was made mainly based on two considerations. The procedure enables me to get more familiar with the information interviewees provided, especially their tones and feelings which would otherwise not be available if the transcribing job is done by a third party. Another consideration is, it provides additional opportunities for me to review and verify the information by repeatedly listening to or reading the interview contents though the process itself was boring, mentally and physically.

Three months later, a total of 245 pages of transcripts in Chinese were yielded. These transcripts have generated a rich database for the purpose of exploring the nature of the research. Some transcripts were sent back to corresponding informants for verification of their accuracy and reliability.

More accurate data analysis with coding was made shortly after the transcripts were done. As qualitative data coding is “the formal representation of analytic thinking” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 155), I tried to explore suitable coding strategies for better presenting the findings of this study. The master codes included the five key variables and their corresponding subunits of analysis based on the functional analytic model: Policy delivery and communications in the implementation; institutional goals and strategies of the implementation; involvement and participation in the implementation process; outcomes and evaluations of the implementation; and institutional barriers and stakeholder’s attitudes to the implementation of the national

policy of teacher education reform (please recall Chapter Four).

The second level of codes was based on Bogdan and Biklen's ten coding categories, i.e., setting/context codes, definition of the situation codes, perspectives held by subjects, subjects' ways of thinking about people and objects, process codes, activity codes, event codes, strategy codes, and relationship and social structure codes (1998, pp. 172-177). This study used most of the ten categories in general, but focused on informants' perspectives on and involvement in the implementation process in particular. In addition, three types of codes, i.e., descriptive codes, interpretive codes and pattern codes (Miles & Huberman, 1994, pp. 57), were used in the coding system of this study. Specifically, the pattern coding strategy was applied to understand "the patterns, the recurrences and the plausible whys" from interview data (Miles & Huberman, 1994, pp. 69).

To be more efficient, the coding process was based on the transcripts in Chinese, but the bits and pieces of the transcripts, whenever was necessary, were translated into English for the purpose of writing this dissertation. In addition, I manually coded the interview data, for there was no known qualitative computer software for Chinese text when I analyzed them,

TRIANGULATION AND RELIABILITY

Yin suggests using multiple sources of evidence to triangulate data collected, and argues that "a major strength of case study data collection is the opportunity to use many different sources of evidence" (2003, p. 97). The interviews and documents

collected in this study were triangulated with each other to assure the accuracy of data and interpretations. In addition, this study invited several key informants for “member checking” (Stake, 1995, p. 115). The procedure included several follow-up interviews and verifications via phone and email. Meanwhile, about one-fourths of transcribed drafts were sent back to their corresponding interviewees via email for verifications. By this process, the accuracy and validity of data collected in the field are significantly assured.

On the other hand, as many researchers have agreed, triangulation serves also to clarify meaning by identifying different ways the phenomenon is being seen (Flick, 1998; Silverman, 1993). In other words, triangulation provides great opportunities to look into the phenomenon in complimentary ways and verify the facts by various sources. In this study, interview data collected from different informants and documents collected in the field were triangulated to reveal various perceptions, individual standpoints and subjectivities for the policy implementation process.

To increase the reliability of this case study, a chain of evidence (Yin, 2003, p. 105) was maintained. This process allows readers or external evaluators to trace how the case study protocol was based on research questions, how data were collected from multiple sources according to the protocol, and how the final report was inferred from the database. Although it was a complicated and rigorous process step by step, this study saw it as a key quality control for data collection, analysis, and reporting.

LIMITATIONS

There are many advantages with a case study approach, but there also are disadvantages that are embedded in case studies. For this study, there are two likely limitations embedded in the nature of the research. The first limitation lay in the generalization of findings. China has the largest teacher education system in the world and has significant regional and institutional differences. The selection of the case for this study was heavily relied on recent rankings of socioeconomic development level and student enrollment, but indicators for socioeconomic development and the development of a university could be more complicated and therefore may vary significantly from one to another. Findings from a single selected case may reveal some major dimensions in the nationwide policy implementation process, but they cannot be fully generalized or applied to other settings without considering various local conditions and other issues associated with generalizing across contexts.

The second limitation is about the trustworthiness of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290), or its validity. Data collected from interviews might have some untrustworthy accounts about the implementation process, as a result of the political tradition in contemporary China. For example, although the madness of the Great Culture Revolution ended three decades ago (Lin, 1991), some Chinese people are still afraid of writing down or publicly sharing with others their real thoughts, judgments or feelings about political and policy issues. Participants in the study may have sensed some interview questions as threatening, namely, politically-sensitive. The minor untrustworthy accounts to a certain degree may reduce the trustworthiness of the study. To maximize the trustworthiness of the study, interview questions have

been designed as less politically-sensitive as possible. In addition, personal information and interview locations have been kept confidential and safe for the informants.

ETHICAL CONCERNS

Because of the nature of the research questions and my status of being a graduate student studying abroad, there was generally minimal threat to the participants in the study as a result of their participation. For example, as an overseas Chinese graduate student, I was not involved in any political process of the policy. I did not present a “threat” to the participants on site in any possible way.

The research might face some ethical issues such as risks and confidentiality of the research which are associated with the dissemination of my final report, but every possible effort has been made to minimize these threats. The research rigidly adopted the criteria of the American Anthropological Association and strictly complied with the University of Maryland’s Institutional Review Board requirements for conducting research that involves human subjects. There were no known risks and/or discomforts associated with the study, and I will share my findings with the participants after the research is completed. In the final product, my dissertation, participants’ names and the name of the case investigated will not be associated with my research findings in any way, and the identities of participants are known only to me. Before conducting the interviews, I used an interview consent form to inform participants about the details and risks of the research and the interview, and to obtain their consents and signatures for participation and audio-recording.

The next chapter will finally bring us into the case – Yangtze Normal University.

CHAPTER 6

PORTRAYALS: YANGTZE NORMAL UNIVERSITY AS THE CASE

As I have mentioned in Chapter Two, China's normal universities were re-established as independent teacher education systems after 1949. By 1953 after the radical reordering of colleges and departments (*yuanxi tiaozheng*), there were a total of 31 independent normal universities/colleges nationwide (China National Institute for Educational Research, 1984, pp. 90-91). Among them, Yangtze Normal University is one of the earliest independent teacher education institutions in China established after 1949.

This chapter briefly introduces Yangtze Normal University as the case selected for this study. It first sketches the history and institutional development of Yangtze Normal University. It then portrays the university's organizational settings and the College of Educational Science. The relationship the university has with the central and local governments is also discussed.

HISTORY AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Yangtze Normal University is a provincial higher learning institution for teachers, situated in a busy inland metropolitan area in east China. Though it was one of the national comprehensive universities at its early stage, it was reconstructed as a provincial key teacher education institution in the early 1950s.

By 1954, Yangtze Normal University had five departments, majoring in Chinese language, History, Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry, respectively. Meanwhile, there were six independent *jiaoyanshi* (teaching and research unit) such as *jiaoyanshi* of pedagogy and *jiaoyanshi* of psychology which provided required courses for prospective teachers. By that time, the total number of faculty and registered students was over two hundred and one thousand, respectively. In 1962, the number of faculty was doubled and that of students was tripled. Yangtze Normal University recovered from the ten chaotic years of the Great Culture Revolution which ended in 1976, and rapidly enlarged its faculty to near as one thousand by 1983. In the same year, student enrollment jumped to more than five thousand.

By 2006, Yangtze Normal University has three urban campuses¹⁶ on a total of 550 acres of land. More than 550 professors and another 500 full-time teachers are teaching 27,500 students studying in 78 graduate programs and 55 undergraduate programs. The faculty-student ratio is about one to thirty. With about 2.5 million volumes of books and three libraries on campus, the university's library system is one of the two largest in the province of Yangtze. The university is now ambitiously

¹⁶ Among the three campuses, the new campus is the largest and is still under construction which will be finished by 2008.

planning and constructing its new campus which will be able to host 30,000 students alone.

ORGANIZATIONAL SETTINGS

Since the reordering of colleges and departments in the early 1950s, Yangtze Normal University has fundamentally revamped its mission and teaching programs once housed in a comprehensive university to an independent normal university. For example, its mission was updated as a normal university whose responsibility was to train qualified teachers for the province. In fact, it has produced the largest number of graduates in teaching in the province.

Since the late 1990s when the national policy of higher education expansion began to be put into place, Yangtze Normal University has taken many actions to significantly expand its academic programs and student enrollment.¹⁷ It now consists of 15 colleges or schools, such as the College of Educational Science, the College of Language and Humanities, the College of Foreign Language, the College of International Education, the Institute of Economics and Management, the School of Law and Politics, the School of Music, the Academy of Arts, the College of Territorial Resources and Tourism, the College of Computer and Mathematical Sciences, the College of Physics and Electronic Communications, the College of Life Sciences, the College of Environment Science, the College of Chemistry and Materials Science, etc.

¹⁷ The gross enrolment of higher education institutions has increased from 9.8 million in 1998 to 19 million in 2004 (MOE, 2003, February 27; The MOE, 2005, April). The radical expansion of higher education was to fulfill the goal of providing mass higher education to the nation. Also refer to Figure 6.1 in this chapter (p. 157), and Table 2.2 and Figure 2.3 in Chapter 2 (p. 56).

Some of these colleges have earned prestigious academic status nationally or internationally.

At the same time, Yangtze Normal University has upgraded its teaching programs for both undergraduate and graduate students. It now offers 133 programs covering from undergraduate studies to Ph.D. studies. By contrast in 1983, there were only 13 undergraduate programs, no doctoral program and only 20 graduate students were registered in its M.A. programs. In the late 1990s, Yangtze Normal University began to radically expand its capacities in providing more learning opportunities. By 2005, there were a total of 27,500 students studying on three main campuses in Yangtze Normal University. Figure 6.1 shows that a steep expansion of student enrollment from 1990 through 2004.

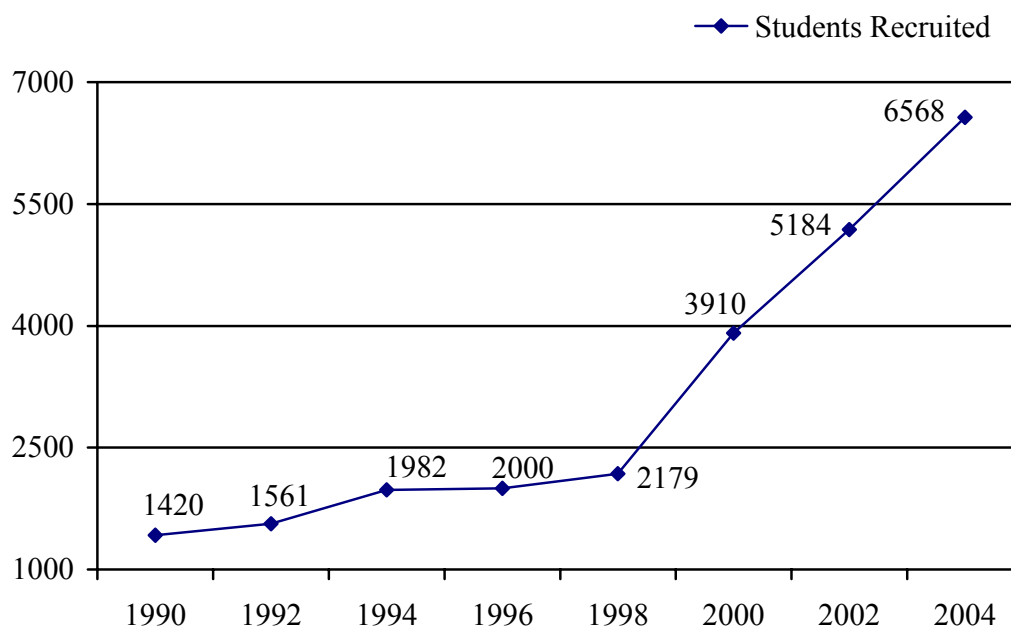


Figure 6.1. Recruitment Change by year in Yangtze Normal University (1990-2004). Data from the Yangtze Normal University website.

Like any other normal universities in China, three clusters of courses are provided to students who major in teacher education in Yangtze Normal University. These courses include: 1) disciplinary courses, e.g., educational theories, psychology, and pedagogy; 2) professional specialty courses, e.g., classical Chinese language, history of Chinese literature in the Department of Chinese Language and Literature; and 3) ideological-political education in Marxism and Leninism and Mao Zedong's thoughts. These courses provide future teachers with the foundations of educational and psychological theories and practice, theories and applications of professional disciplines, and Marxist perspectives to understand the relationship between education and the development of human beings in a socialist society. Among the

three clusters of courses, the College of Educational Science provides disciplinary courses for students of teacher education on campus.

THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCE

The College of Educational Science is one of the fastest growing schools on campus of Yangtze Normal University. In 2000, the College of Educational Science was founded based on the Department of Education which is one of the earliest departments at Yangtze Normal University. College programs aims to prepare educators, counselors, psychologists, administrators, researchers, and educational specialists. Educational programs are accredited and approved by the MOE. By 2005, the college had 90 fulltime faculty working in five departments such as the Department of Education, the Department of Psychology, the Department of Preschool Education, and the Department of Educational Technology. Around 2,000 students were studying in six undergraduate degree programs and seven graduate degree programs. The college has become the largest base for educational research and training in Yangtze province.

Since 2004, Yangtze Normal University has been preparing for the establishment of a new College of Teacher Education to deepen the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform. The new college will be based on the current College of Educational Science but will also consolidate all the programs related to teacher education in Yangtze Normal University, including the programs of discipline-based teaching theories for teacher education from each department on campus.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH CENTRAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Yangtze Normal University is a provincial key university. Traditionally, key universities in China mean that they have priority to receive more/better public resources from central and local governments.¹⁸ In the name of optimizing resources, key schools have always taken advantage of their status to consume more public resources. Yangtze Normal University is no exception. Generally, more budgets are allocated to it every year by the provincial government for its daily operation and development. In other words, it is financially controlled by Yangtze Provincial Department of Education. Additionally, it is directly under the provincial department's leadership and is indirectly overlooked by the Ministry of Education. By this relationship with the Provincial Department of Education and the Ministry of Education, Yangtze Normal University must actively carry out various policies promulgated by the province and/or the central government.

Yangtze Normal University and the local government also have a tight bilateral relationship. The university is located in the downtown of Yangtze city, but has no administrative relationship with the local government. In fact, both the university and the government of the city are in parallel under the leadership of the provincial government. In this arrangement, the relationship between the two is equal and independent of each other. However, the local government has had omnipresent influences on Yangtze Normal University, politically and economically. For example, Yangtze city is recently under reconstruction with a new plan for urban development.

¹⁸ About the key school system in China, please refer to Footnote 4 in Chapter 2 (pp. 33-34).

This plan includes a relocation of the main campus of Yangtze Normal University to a new development district. Yangtze Normal University has historically occupied the area of the main campus for decades and, of course, is reluctantly to leave. The local government requested the provincial government to exert pressures on Yangtze Normal University and meanwhile offers huge financial compensations including long-term loans for construction of a new campus. Both sides finally agreed on the new plan for the development of the city as well as the university.

On the other hand, Yangtze Normal University also plays an important role in local socio-economic development. Since the late 1990s, the university has been able to recruit more than two thousand students every year. Currently, as many as 35,000 students are living on the university's main campus. The student population and the campus create numerous job opportunities and bring many business opportunities to the local community.

The brief introduction of Yangtze Normal University provides us a primary understanding of how a typical teacher education institution looks like in China. The next three chapters will allow us to learn more about how Yangtze Normal University implemented the national policy of teacher education reform since the 1990s.

CHAPTER 7

POLICY DELIVERY AND ADJUSTMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL GOALS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL POLICY

This chapter examines how the national policy of teacher education reform was channeled from the national level to the department/faculty level at Yangtze Normal University, and how the university's institutional goals were reoriented to meet the requirements of the national policy for teacher education reform. It begins with an introduction about how the administration system works in Yangtze Normal University.

THE ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM OF YANGTZE NORMAL UNIVERSITY

According to *the Higher Education Law of the People's Republic of China*, promulgated on August 29, 1998, China's public institutions of higher learning practice "the president responsibility system under the leadership of the grass-roots committees of the Chinese Communist Party" (*Higher Education Law of the People's Republic of China*, 1998, August 29, Article 39). This president responsibility system in higher education institutions has been adopted in China since the early 1960s (Yu

& Zhao, 1981). Like any other public university in China, Yangtze Normal University observes the national regulations by adopting a president responsibility system under the CPC's leadership (*dangwei lingdao xia de xiaozhang fuze zhi*), i.e., the supervisory leadership by the CPC Committee and the executive leadership by the presidency of the university. In fact, the incorporated dual systems are a typical administrative mode for all governmental agencies and public institutions including educational institutions such as universities, elementary and secondary schools in China.

The Supervisory Leadership by the Communist Party of China

The Communist Party of China has been the sole party in power in the country since 1949, as mentioned in Chapter Two. In public higher learning institutions, *the Higher Education Law* stipulates the responsibilities and functions of CPC as the following:

In accordance with the Constitution of the Chinese Communist Party, the grass-roots committees (*jiceng dangwei*) of the Chinese Communist Party in institutions of higher learning exercise unified leadership over school work and support the presidents in independently and responsibly discharging their duties. Their responsibilities of leadership are mainly as follows: to implement the directives and policies of the Chinese Communist Party, adhere to the socialist orientation of running the institution, exercise leadership over ideological and political work and those work related to morality in the institutions, hold discussions and make decisions on the set-up of internal organizational structures and selection of candidates for the persons-in-charge of internal organizational structures, hold discussions and make decisions on such major matters as the reform, development and basic administrative rules of the institutions to ensure the completion of various tasks centered round the training of talents.¹⁹ (*Higher Education Law of the People's Republic of China*, 1998, August 29, Article 39)

By this law, the CPC effectively plays a dominant role in the administration of

¹⁹ This English text is adopted from the MOE official translation (Please refer to: http://www.moe.edu.cn/english/laws_h.htm)

a public higher learning institution. Within this political system, major leaders and administrators must first be a CPC member before they can take their corresponding administrative positions.

In the case of Yangtze Normal University, CPC leadership is exercised by the Party Committee which is elected by the University CPC Congress and is approved by the Provincial CPC Congress. As regulated in *the Higher Education Law*, the University CPC Committee is responsible for executing or implementing the guidelines and policies of the Central or Provincial Committee of CPC. In this arrangement, the CPC committee functions as a main instrument in carrying out national/provincial policies. In reality, the Secretary of CPC Committee has the dominant power in leadership on campus, though this power is supervised by the University CPC Committee, the CPC Congress and the CPC Commission for Discipline Inspection. Currently, Yangtze Normal University has one secretary and three assistant secretaries of CPC, all of whom were elected at the University Eighth Plenary Session of the CPC Congress in June of 2004 (see Figure 7.1).

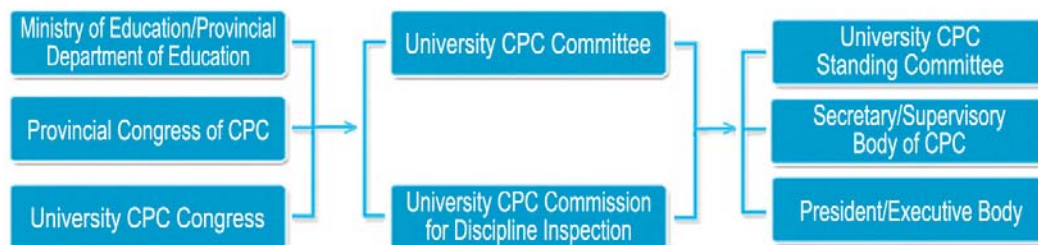


Figure 7.1. The simplified supervisory system of CPC at Yangtze Normal University. The supervisory leadership of all colleges and departments in Yangtze Normal University is similar to this system. Adapted from the Yangtze Normal University website.

By the same token, all colleges and departments at Yangtze Normal University follow a similar administrative model but with a simpler structure. For example, the College of Educational Science has a College CPC Subcommittee which is responsible for executing or implementing the guidelines and policies of the CPC University Committee. Currently, the body of college CPC supervisory leadership includes one Secretary, one Assistant Secretary and five Committee members of the CPC.

The Executive Leadership of the Presidency of the University

Similar to the national administration system in which the State Council assumes overall responsibility for the national administrative work under the CPC's supervision, the executive leadership by President of Yangtze Normal University assumes overall responsibility for the day-to-day administration of the university. Under the supervision of the CPC University Committee and regulated by *the Higher*

Education Law, President is fully responsible for the teaching, scientific research and other administrative work of the university, and exercises the following duties and powers:

- To draft development plans, formulate specific rules and regulations, and make annual work plan and organize activities for their implementation;
- To organize teaching activities, scientific research and ideological and moral education;
- To draft schemes for the setting up of internal organizations, recommend candidates for vice presidency, appoint and relieve persons-in charge of internal organizations;
- To employ and dismiss teachers and other internal workers, administer student affairs, and give rewards or impose penalties;
- To draft and implement annual budget proposal, protect and manage school properties and safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of the school; and
- To exercise other duties and powers provided for in the articles of association. (*Higher Education Law of the People's Republic of China*, 1998, August 29, *Article 41*)

In addition, President chairs the president's administrative meetings or the university's administrative meetings and handles other relevant matters. Under the executive leadership of the president, Yangtze Normal University has a range of administrative offices or units executing various jobs on campus (See Figure 7.2). For example, the Office of Financial Services is primarily responsible for providing various financial services such as budget and accounting management, and overall financial management for the university. The Office of Teaching Affairs holds overall responsibility for coordinating undergraduate teaching and curricula, and administering student learning. The Office of Scientific Research coordinates scientific research and development, disciplinary planning and construction.

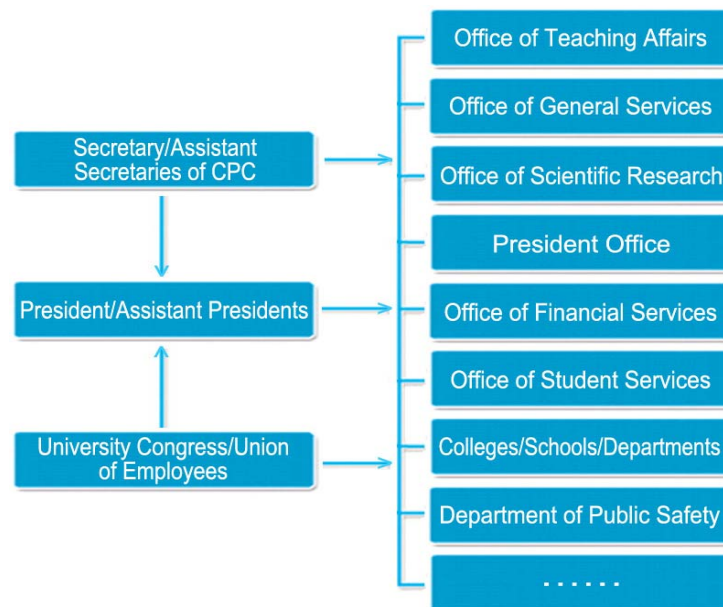


Figure 7.2. The simplified executive system at Yangtze Normal University. The executive leadership of all colleges and departments at Yangtze Normal University is miniaturized from this system. Adapted from the Yangtze Normal University website.

The executive leadership in colleges and departments also follows similar model but with a simpler structure, as it is case in establishing the supervisory leadership of CPC at the same level. In the case of the College of Educational Science, the executive body includes a dean, three assistant deans, and five administrative assistants.

TOP-DOWN POLICY DELIVERY IN THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

In China, it is a common administration model since 1949 that higher education

institutions have been under the direct leadership of the Ministry of Education or the provincial department of education, which in turn are supervised by the CPC.

Generally, national policies are linearly channeled to higher education institutions from the Ministry of Education and/or the provincial administration of education in two ways. Oftentimes, before a national policy of education is formally publicized, university leaders will be summoned for a special meeting to the Ministry of Education or to the provincial department of education. After the meeting, the university leaders will bring back the policy document and relevant requirements and begin to plan how to implement the policy on campus.

In other occasions, a national policy is delivered to universities via the official delivery system from the Ministry of Education to universities directly, or via the provincial department of education indirectly. In this process, the provincial administration of education serves as a conveyor or a buffer agency. As a provincial key normal university, Yangtze Normal University as a rule receives national policies from the Yangtze Provincial Department of Education.

After national policies, especially major national policies, were officially passed down, Yangtze Normal University normally would hold special working meetings to implement them. For example, on Sept. 18, 2004, the university held the Third Working Meeting on Teaching, in order to implement the requirements of *the Rejuvenation Action Plan for Education 2003-2007* by the Ministry of Education (2004, February 10). The implementation goals and strategies were put into place soon after these working meetings. As shown in Figure 7.3, the policy flow in Yangtze Normal University for the implementation of the national policy was top-

down and linear. This was taken as a rational, efficient and systematic way for policy delivery on campus.

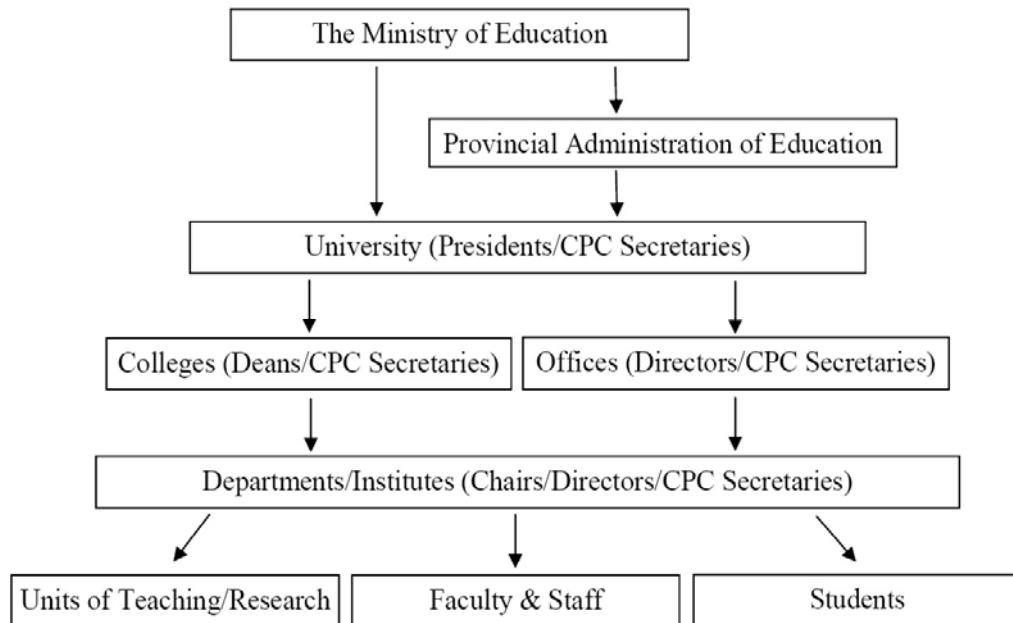


Figure 7.3. The Policy Flow in Yangtze Normal University. Based on Figure 7.1 and Figure 7.2 from the Yangtze Normal University website.

COMMUNICATION OF THE NATIONAL POLICY TO THE STAKEHOLDERS

Communication is a key process by which policy goals and strategies are mapped out for implementers/participants. Yangtze Normal University has routinely adopted a communication form, namely, *chuanda*, for the implementation of the national policy.

Chuanda literally means “passing on and reach.” It refers to a regular, official communication system characterized by an asymmetrical top-down flow of policies, laws, or other legislations. Generally, *chuanda* is characterized by the CPC leaders

engaging government agencies/offices at all levels, schools/universities, military organizations, factories, companies, etc., in learning about the policies formed by the upper level of government.

Chuanda has been adopted as a powerful propaganda system by the CPC since its birth in 1927 to publicize the CPC's policies and theories. On some occasions, it has been employed as a form to study Communist leader's works, e.g., *the Selections of Mao Zedong*, *the Selections of Deng Xiaoping*, and *the Selections of Jiang Zemin*, etc. Under many circumstances, *chuanda* has been used as a way to exert ideological/political control by the CPC on the populace, whenever is necessary. *Chuanda* is generally considered as a powerful and effective communication system for the Chinese government to deliver national key policies or legislations for it is a regular, institutional and systematic communication form. Although *chuanda* was generally asymmetrical and top-down in Yangtze Normal University, it served as a political template for the CPC members, administrators/implementers and participants/faculty to communicate and discuss with each other about the national policy of teacher education reform.

Chuanda has involved various forms of communication. One major form is holding special meetings or workshops. The Third Working Meeting on Teaching held by Yangtze Normal University on Sept. 18, 2004, as above mentioned, was an example as one form of *chuanda*. Another form, probably a most often-used form, is political studies (*zhengzhi xuexi*). *Zhengzhi xuexi* is one of the most common forms of *chuanda* required by the CPC. It is generally based on a teaching or research unit, or on an academic department in China's universities. Similar form also exists in local

governments, public or government-run institutions/companies, etc. One of its major functions is to serve as a regular official communication mechanism to pass on governmental policies, legislations and alike to faculty members, staff, and students. It is also used to collect recommendations, comments and feedback from the upper level authorities. The officially organized *zhengzhi xuexi* is generally held once a week, usually in the afternoon on Wednesday or Friday. Attendance is mandatory for all faculty, leaders, staff and students. Subgroups meetings based on the nature of a group are also held frequently, such as faculty's *zhengzhi xuexi*, leaders' *zhengzhi xuexi*, and students' *zhengzhi xuexi*, etc. Since the late 1980s, with depoliticization and marketization taking place in China, this official communication form has been gradually watered down, where people discuss barely any political issues, although it is still being held in most universities or public agencies every week.

According to most informants who were university/college leaders, Yangtze Normal University adopted *zhengzhi xuexi* as the major communication mechanism to deliver the national policy of teacher education. In Yangtze Normal University, *zhengzhi xuexi* has never been interrupted. When informants were asked about the specific communication means employed in Yangtze Normal University to implement the national policy, two deans responded that *zhengzhi xuexi* was the most popular channel through which the national policy was disseminated. Chair Caifei noted that once the national policy was formed and publicized, governments at all levels and Yangtze Normal University had to carry it out with detailed strategies. To him, *zhengzhi xuexi* served as the major source for faculty to learn about the national policy of teacher education reform. Dean Enwei also explained:

The most important channel is *zhengzhi xuexi* which is generally organized from the upper level to lower level. As long as our university organizes it – whatever it is about, we have to participate.

While the university officials claimed *zhengzhi xuexi* has been employed as the most important way to relay the national policy of teacher education reform to everybody on campus, other informants had different opinions. Prof. Ouying first fundamentally questioned the effectiveness of the university's official communication system and stated that it was "not effective at all." Most other informants pointed out that both the mass media and the university's official communication system were important policy sources for them, but the mass media was definitely their primary channel to learn about the national policy. Other information channels for policy delivery included academic journals, special meetings, word of mouth, etc. Chair Beihua observed that the university did not employ its official communication system to publicize the national policy except for *the Teachers' Law* and *the Educational Law*, and his personal knowledge of the national policy was mainly obtained from the mass media. Director Futang added:

I actually had the information through the media even before it was conveyed in teaching and research activities.... My impression is that, it is very rare that the university publicizes [the national policy] via the official routes. Sometimes, there is an offprint of policy document distributed to teachers' mailboxes through their respective colleges or departments, and that's it.... [As to *Zhengzhi xuexi*], its key function is definitely watered down.

In fact, there is a big difference between the university's official communication system and the mass media. The university's official communication system tended to be a politically forced form through which informants *passively* received official information, whereas the mass media provided omnipresent resources for informants to *actively* select and accept what they wanted to know. Prof.

Quguo supported Director Futang's observations with his critical view:

Zhengzhi xuexi only seems to be a major way [of getting the information of central government policies], but it has actually become an insignificant way. Most of our teachers actively seek out information about the national policy by following the media, i.e., the mass media including newspapers, TV programs, the internet, etc. Earlier, we have been usually uninformed about government policies for specific group such as for teachers. For instance, we don't know if we ever studied *the Teachers' Law*, *the Higher Education Law*, or *the Vocational Education Law*, etc.... It seemed that administrators didn't care about this issue or they assumed that these [policies] should be known by the professors anyway.

Chair Inling, Prof. Quguo's wife, was even angry at having no official access on campus to learn about the national policy of teacher education:

There is no way to have organized studies on these specific policies. I have more opportunities [than my husband] to participate in [university/college] meetings, for I am a CPC member. There is also no way to have access to these specific policies by the official CPC's group studies or activities.

Although most informants agreed that the mass media and university's official communication system were the two resources by which they got familiar with the national policy of teacher education reform, some of them warned the need for a cautious attitude toward mass media, as Dean Hengtang put it:

The media usually functions as an entertainment tool for the public, thus it is neither accurate nor authoritative. To ensure that information is authentic and authoritative, [we] have to see what the policy document says. The central government's policy and its implementation have to be passed on through the provincial government – this is what media can not do.

Dean Hengtang made a good point for understanding the university's official communication system: Although its effectiveness was under question, the official channel is still the channel of authority and power in the delivery of the national policy.

It appeared that Yangtze Normal University has adopted what it believed to be

the most effective form of communication for the implementation of the national policy. However, most implementers and participants critically viewed it as an ineffective way, out of the expectation of the officials.

ALIGNMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL GOALS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL POLICY

Ambiguity in the University Mission

The original mission of Yangtze Normal University before the 1990s was very general, just like that of any other universities in China. For example, it was stated in an official document of Yangtze Normal University, published in the October of 1983:

Yangtze Normal University is a provincial key normal university with a long history, providing comparatively complete programs in science and liberal arts for training teachers. It aims to produce more qualified talents for socialist construction and contribute to the socialist country.

The top leaders and implementers of Yangtze Normal University met together from July 30th to August 2nd, 2003, to plan for the future development of Yangtze Normal University. Topics such as what type of university Yangtze Normal University should become, that is, to become a comprehensive university or to remain a teachers university, and how to construct either, became hotly debated. In the April of 2005, the university's *Strategic Plan for the Eleventh Five-year Plan and the Year of 2015* reshaped its mission in the following:

We will strive to build up a comprehensive teaching and research university primarily featured with teacher education, to become a key base for producing high-level talents in research and technology innovation in the province and, to contribute to the revitalization of Yangtze province through science and education.

The new mission clearly kept its original statement that the university aimed to be a provincial key teaching institution and a research base for teacher education. The original meaning of a *normal* university, however, was no longer attached to the new mission statement. Instead, after the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform for more than one decade, Yangtze Normal University was gradually losing its original identity as a *normal* university, and was evolving toward a *comprehensive* university featured with teacher education. The newly revised mission became ambiguous in terms of defining its teacher education identity and seemed to be contradictory to the rational requirements of the national policy of teacher education reform.

The identity ambiguity of Yangtze Normal University was chiefly the result of the national policy of higher education expansion since the late 1990s. Dean Hengtang observed that the university wanted to keep its distinguishing feature as a teacher education institution. However, after the radical expansion of enrollment since the early 1990s,²⁰ teacher education programs were incapable of accommodating the large number of students or meeting the needs for socioeconomic development in Yangtze province. Therefore, Yangtze Normal University had to open new programs, e.g., non-teacher education programs. Dean Hengtang envisioned that the overall trend in the future would be that the teacher education programs would retain their original size instead of undergoing major expansion, and the non-teacher education programs would be expanded. Prof. Mawei was a retired senior professor in

²⁰ As to the expansion of higher education and the enrollment expansion of Yangtze Normal University since the 1990s, please refer to Table 2.2 and Figure 2.3 in Chapter 2 (p. 56), and Figure 6.1 in Chapter 6 (p. 157), respectively.

history of education. He also noted that the ambiguity of teacher education identity was to be traced from the radical expansion of student enrollment in higher education:

We have to recruit students [for survival], so we could not limit student admission to teacher education. Like our college, teacher education students are only one-third, all the rest are non-teacher education students. Our identity is ambiguous now, the label we have is a normal university, but in fact we are no longer focusing just on teacher education.

While some informants deemed this change as unavoidable, Prof. Peishi was very critical about the trend. He held that the identity ambiguity of Yangtze Normal University had led to conditions challenging the legitimacy and status of teacher education. That is, teacher education as the traditional feature and strength of Yangtze Normal University was being undermined. He opined that the neglect of the traditional feature and strengths of Yangtze Normal University was responsible for the significant decline of teaching quality:

The problem that comes with it is: We are very embarrassed by the teaching quality of our university. Our students have become not as competitive in academic achievement as those from comprehensive universities, and they are also not as competitive either when compared with those from less prestigious normal universities in their learning in teacher education. Especially in recent years, the feedback we have received told us that the teaching ability and educational skills of our students were not competitive with those of students from less prestigious normal universities. This clearly indicates that, we have severely neglected the importance of teacher education. Our leaders definitely know the problem, but nobody cares enough to deal with it.

The critical review presented by Prof. Peishi strongly underscored that the institutional goals of Yangtze Normal University have significantly deviated from the requirements of the national policy of teacher education reform, although teacher education was still cited as its primary focus in policy documents. In reality, the ambiguity of teacher education identity has had negative impact on the implementation of the national reform. For example, by 2005, more than half of the

students registered at Yangtze Normal University did not major in teacher education programs as they used to before the late 1990s. If viewed from this statistical fact, Yangtze Normal University has changed its identity from being a teacher education institution to that of a comprehensive university, and Chair Beihua critically questioned:

We are a normal university, right? Most of our students should be studying in teacher education programs for [our goals are to] prepare prospective teachers. But now our non-teacher education programs do not prepare teachers, and students in these programs are more than half of the total students registered.

It is obvious that the institutional goals at Yangtze Normal University have deviated from the policy requirements of the national policy of teacher education. It is also obvious that the distinguishing feature and tradition of teacher education which once defined Yangtze Normal University has been gradually weakened due to the university's shifting its goals from fulfilling its mission of teacher education.

The New Mission for the College of Teacher Education

As Prof. Peishi and Chair Beihua's have critically pointed out, to a certain extent, the status of teacher education has changed in Yangtze Normal University. However, at another level, the University has taken substantial steps to prepare for the establishment of the College of Teacher Education, as a key strategy to implement the national policy of teacher education. The new mission for the College of Teacher Education reflected the comprehensive requirements of the national policy of teacher education reform.

The new mission for the College of Teacher Education was based on three national policy documents of teacher education reform: *the CPCCC and State*

Council's Decision on the Deepening of Educational Reform and the Full Promotion of Quality Education (1999, June 13), *the Decision on the Reform and Development of Basic Education* (the State Council, 2001, May 29) and *the Opinion on the Reform and Development of Teacher Education during the Tenth Five-year National Plan* (The MOE, 2002, February 6). It aimed at the promotion of teacher education and the optimization of teacher education resources, improving the quality of teacher workforce and promoting teacher professionalization, building up a prestigious college of teacher education in Yangtze province and becoming one of the national bases for teacher education.

After the College of Teacher Education is established, as Dean Hengtang suggested, teacher education programs in Yangtze Normal University would remain in the current size. But he believed that the teaching quality of teacher education programs would be considerably enhanced, and so would be the status of teacher education at Yangtze Normal University, for the new college would optimize all teacher education programs at Yangtze Normal University.

Thus far, this chapter has examined the administration system of Yangtze Normal University and how it maintained as a top-down, linear policy delivery system for the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform. It further reveals how Yangtze Normal University has employed its official communication mechanism, i.e., *zhengzhi xuexi*, to ensure the success of the policy delivery. Many implementers and participants viewed it, however, as a “watered down,” incompetent form for the communication of the national policy. In addition, due to the national policy of higher education expansion, the implementation goals in

Yangtze Normal University have deviated from the requirements of the national policy of teacher education reform. The critical voices of implementers and participants on the deviation of the university's mission from teacher education has created political pressures for the university to consider enhancing teacher education by the establishment of a new College of Teacher Education. The next chapter will look into the complicated, dynamic implementation process of the national policy of teacher education reform at Yangtze Normal University.

CHAPTER 8

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL POLICY: A DYNAMIC PROCESS

This chapter probes the dynamic process of the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform in China. It presents how stakeholders at Yangtze Normal University have dynamically involved themselves and participated in the implementation process of the national policy. It also details the implementation strategies and actions Yangtze Normal University has taken, and how these strategies and actions have changed the social status and public image of the university. In addition, it investigates how the outcomes of the implementation of the national policy were evaluated officially and individually by informants.

LEADERS AND FACULTY: INVOLVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

Stakeholders in the implementation of the national policy consisted of groups such as leaders/administrators as *implementers*, and faculty/staff/students as *participants*. Due to the nature of different groups, I limit my focus only on leaders and faculty since they were two major groups of stakeholders in the implementation process. Although they may have different roles in the implementation process of the national policy, both

leaders as implementers and faculty as participants were required to get involved collectively by the university and the national policy in the implementation process.

The Implementers' Roles in the Implementation Process

Yangtze Normal University heavily relies on its administration team to implement the national policy of teacher education reform. The administration team was mainly consisted of the university CPC leaders, members and other administrators in Yangtze Normal University. As previously mentioned, the administration team was under the direct supervisory leadership of the university CPC secretary and committee. The roles these leaders played could be categorized as: 1) A routine job for them in their roles of leadership or administration, since their main responsibility is to implement policies formed by upper level government; 2) a special involvement in related strategic planning and activities for forming and implementing the national policy, by participating in meetings, workshops or discussions, and; 3) effort to integrate the goals of the policy in their course teaching and initiatives for curriculum reform.

The primary role the CPC leaders played in position of leadership or administration was routinely taking actions to implement the national policy according to their various titles and its accorded political power. Usually, the university-level CPC leaders played dominant roles in making decisions and planning for the implementation of the national policy, while the college and department-level leaders played assisting yet substantial roles for carrying out whatever measures that were required by their supervisors. For example, Yangtze Normal University has made a decision to establish the new College of Teacher Education as an important strategy for implementing the national policy of teacher education reform. A vice president as a university CPC committee member was

assigned to take charge of the overall planning for the initiative and acted as the dean of the proposed new college. The dean of the College of Educational Science was required to assist the vice president for the task of preparation. Together, they worked on planning for the establishment of the College of Teacher Education, examining the needs and environmental conditions for the College of Teacher Education, reviewing the challenges the new college may encounter, and proposing specified guidelines, strategies, and steps for the establishment of the College of Teacher Education.

Many informants interviewed by this study had a leading role as a CPC leader in the implementation process of the national policy. For example, Vice President Jiqiang informed that he had taken the responsibility of making decision and planning for teaching affairs at Yangtze Normal University for the implementation of the national policy. When the national policy was delivered to Yangtze Normal University, he summoned key implementers such as deans and department chairs, and office directors to discuss how to make institutional plan and strategies for the implementation of the national policy.

Generally, department chairs and deans were the major implementers at a lower level on campus. Chair Caifei detailed his role in these words: “I have to get involved [as the chair]. When the policy comes, I as an administrator and a professor must get to know it and carry it out.” When he was asked which identity, as an administrator or a senior professor, allowed him to be more actively involved in the implementation process, he responded:

Of course, as an administrator [you] are more active, [for] you are not only required to get to know your own stuff, you also have to know others’, and you have to carry out the intention of your supervisor and the national policy. The role

an administrator plays is definitely much more [than that of a professor], and this role is critical....Administrators must know [about the policy] much more than professors. Thus, from the viewpoint of administration, [administrators] should have more awareness of the policy and get comprehensively involved. As a professor, you can focus on knowing what you should know. But as an administrator, it's definitely impossible.

Chair Caifei sketched the role an administrator generally plays in the implementation process. In his dual roles as an administrator and a professor, his comparison revealed the role difference in the implementation process between implementers and participants, which was affirmed by most other informants. For example, Dean Enwei and Director Gangyang, both playing dual roles as an administrator and a professor, testified that their experiences were very similar to Chair Caifei's. Dean Enwei detailed that, after joining in the leadership and administration of the college his role changed in at least two aspects, that is, he had to look into what the national policy required more intensely, *and* take note of how people responded to the national policy. The two roles required Dean Enwei to play a mediator's role in the implementation process, and this role was very different from what he was used to as a professor.

The second role the leaders played was to act as a consultant for strategic planning of policy actions, by participating in working meetings, workshops, or joining strategic planning groups. For instance, Director Futang had been engaged in a provincial strategic planning for teacher education reform for the 10th five-year plan. This provincial plan has affected the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform in Yangtze Normal University. In addition, when the university needed some leaders with certain expertise to initiate and draft certain reports, plans, or policy documents, he was usually among those invited to join through the College of Educational Science. This was the cases for most implementers. Both Chair Beihua and Director Gangyang mentioned that

they were often invited as a consultant when the university needed to take key policy actions.

The third role the leaders played was taking measures to reform teaching, and be engaged in teaching one or two courses by themselves. This role was typical and common for many leaders, including presidents, deans and chairs/directors, who were called as *Shuangjian tiao* at Yangtze Normal University. In China, *Shuangjian tiao* refers to those who hold a concurrent position of both an administrator and a professor. Chair Beihua detailed his role in the implementation process of the national policy in the following:

[I have been involved] more or less in all kinds of work for the policy's implementation. On this campus, I am probably among those who get most intensively involved. Firstly, I played my role through drafting new course plans for my college and department....Secondly, whether it is a required course or a core course, I always pay special attention to introducing to students the importance of educational science or theories in classroom teaching. I can give you a very simple example. When I taught a required course in Educational Theories to students from the Department of Chemistry, I kicked off the course from the perspective of teachers' professional development, [instead of only introducing the significance of knowing the subject knowledge of chemistry].

In addition, Chair Beihua viewed teaching internship as a critical step to assure the quality of teacher education. He was proud he set tough requirements for students who went for internship. In sum, implementing teaching reform and integrating goals of the national policy into the courses they taught were important forms for leaders to get actively engaged in the implementation of the national policy.

The Participants' roles in the Implementation Process

Although participants were required to act and work to achieve the same policy goals with implementers, their roles were quite different from those of the implementers', because the participants were professors whose main jobs were course teaching and

research. As a result, they played certain but limited roles in the implementation of the national policy. Generally, there were two formal ways and one informal way by which teachers would get involved in the implementation process at Yangtze Normal University.

The first formal way was to take official participation in some critical policy actions, such as being a part of the credit system reform the university implemented in 2003. Usually, only administrators were required to participate in such kinds of activities, but some faculty members, especially policy specialists or senior professors, were also officially invited to be involved in this reform process. Prof. Peishi noted his involvement in the credit system reform saying that several of his suggestions were accepted. Prof. Ningdong witnessed that he knew some faculty members who were invited to discuss certain policy actions for implementing teaching reforms, including initiating new teaching plans in the College of Educational Science.

The second formal way of participation for faculty was that sometimes when the university was to make a big decision or form a strategic plan, teachers were summoned in the form of meetings or seminars to give their recommendations or comments. For example, on April 22, 2005, the university invited many professors to discuss *the University's Strategic Plan for the Eleventh Five-Year Period* at the University Congress of Teachers. This strategic plan was vital as it delineated the university mission as well as a series of substantial strategies for the implementation of the national policy.

The third way of participation for faculty is the informal way. This involvement depended on the relationship between a faculty and leaders or administrators. If a professor had a close relationship with the leaders, s/he might easily be able to get involved in university policy actions. Prof. Peishi reported that he was often invited to

provide his consultation for implementation strategies for the national policy of teacher education reform, because he had close relationships with the university leaders such as the presidents and several directors of university administration offices.

Although faculty had multiple ways to play their roles in the implementation process of the national policy, their roles were in fact very passive and limited. In reality, many of them played just a technical or instrumental role in the implementation process.

Prof. Peishi explained what a technical role was in the following:

That is to say, we are only consulted about whether a statement [of a policy document] is reasonable or not. To see if a statement is reasonable or not is to check if the statement drafted by the leaders are contrary or inconsistent to the national policy of teacher education reform, or if it fits the real circumstance of our university, and if it is consistent with the commonly accepted expression of educational theories.

Prof. Peishi's remarks stressed that although the faculty were consulted, the university/college leaders have always made their own decisions beforehand. Apparently, Prof. Peishi was actively involved in the implementation process of the national policy, but at the same time he was frustrated with the limited role he could play as a faculty member overall.

Worse than that, some faculty informants viewed the current administration system as a bureaucratic stronghold which discouraged or even oppressed faculty's involvement in the implementation process. For example, Prof. Ouying experienced very limited opportunities to be involved in the implementation process of the national policy. She observed that faculty's participation was generally passive and technical, e.g., they were merely participating in whatever the leaders wanted or had planned. She gave her personal negative experience as an example:

Let's talk about the issue of young teachers pursuing higher degree studies. Before [the national policy of teacher education reform was issued], I was not encouraged to do that. But now the university has made a 180-degree attitude change, for it needs a highly-qualified faculty [to meet the requirement of the national policy]. This attitude change actually gives little options for teachers to make their own decision. I did not have any options when the university did not encourage me to do that. Now I still do not have any options when I felt currently I could not enroll myself in a further study program yet I have no choice. Teachers are just passive doers, instead of being active players in the implementation process.

It is obvious that the high political tensions between the implementers and the participants acted as a conflicting arena on which both sides competed for their own political powers. Compared with the active, dominant roles the leaders played in the implementation process, Prof. Ouying's negative experience challenged the rationality of the current administration system, and shed light on the status of faculty as implementation participants at Yangtze Normal University.

INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIES AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

To effectively implement the national policy of teacher education reform, Yangtze Normal University tried to strictly follow the requirements of the national policy of teacher education reform. These requirements urged teacher education institutions to "build up a highly qualified teacher workforce" by redoubling their efforts toward the structural adjustment of teacher education programs, continuously enforcing the reform on training models and curricular systems, and improving training quality (The MOE, 2002, February 6). Based on the requirements of the national policy, Yangtze Normal University has adopted what it perceived to be the most effective strategies with alternatives for substantial policy actions, deeming them to be the logical and rational

choices and moves. These strategies and actions encompassed a wide range of efforts for teaching enhancements, strengthening its distinguishing feature of teacher education and reorganizing academic departments for teacher education.

Enhancing Teaching for Prospective Teachers

For implementing the national policy of teacher education reform and enhancing the quality of teaching at Yangtze Normal University, the university leaders have held three university-wide working meetings on teaching in 1996, 1999 and 2004, respectively. At the Third Meeting on Teaching held in 2004, the President of Yangtze Normal University seriously warned that the quality and quantity of the faculty of Yangtze Normal University did not meet the needs of the university's development and the goals of the national policy. In the same year, *the Opinions on Deepening Teaching Reform, Speeding up Teaching Innovation, and Improving Teaching Quality in Yangtze Normal University* was formally publicized. In this document, the university leaders reviewed and assessed the challenges it faced for improving teaching quality, and viewed the problematic teaching quality in the programs of various departments as the bottleneck restricting the development of Yangtze Normal University. Based on their assessment of the teaching problems, they proposed various strategies and options for the implementation of the national policy in order to build a stronger and larger faculty for the university in the near future. These strategies and options included starting new degree programs, systematically transforming from the academic-year system that the university had long used to a new credit system, strengthening teaching workforce and its management, upgrading teaching facilities and improving the learning environment, etc.

Starting New Degree Programs

Since the June of 1994, Yangtze Normal University has started new degree programs for undergraduates and graduates, in addition to its traditional degree programs. Two four-year undergraduate degree programs, e.g., computer science and sociology, were set up in 1994 and 1997, respectively. The university has since 2001 begun to provide undergraduate students new required courses such as modern educational technologies, to address the new challenges from IT development and applications in education. In addition, many new graduate degree programs have been offered since 1998. These graduate degree programs included Master's programs in aesthetics, modern Chinese literature, general theory of education, analytical chemistry, physical chemistry, applied mathematics, etc. Further, doctoral programs were offered such as those in ancient Chinese history, ancient Chinese literature, ecology, organic chemistry, etc.

Since 1999, Yangtze Normal University has been accredited by the MOE to confer the Educational Master's Degree in Subject Teaching (Ed.M.), which covers three graduate programs: administration of education, subject teaching of chemistry, and subject teaching of Chinese language. The newly started Master's degree programs showed that Yangtze Normal University had employed substantial strategies in implementing the national policy of teacher education reform to fulfill the goal of structural adjustment of teacher education programs. By 2005, approximately one hundred graduate students enrolled in the Ed.M. programs provided by the College of Educational Sciences.

Adopting a New Credit System

Up to the early 1990s, universities in China had been using an academic-year

system adopted from the former Soviet Union. The biggest disadvantage of the academic-year system was that it deprived flexibility from students to choose courses and to adjust their learning schedule. Therefore, the academic-year system was seen to inadequate for meeting the new requirements set by the national policy to improve the quality of student training and to facilitate the structural adjustment of teacher education programs.

In 2002, Yangtze Normal University decided to give up its old academic-year system which had been in practice for nearly 50 years, and adopt a new credit system as a major strategy to highly improve its quality of undergraduate teacher education. On December 26th, 2002, *the Opinions on Kicking off the Credit System for Deepening Teaching Reform in Yangtze Normal University* was promulgated. The policy document clearly claimed that the adoption of the new credit system was to enhance the distinguishing features of teacher education in Yangtze Normal University. Specifically, the new credit system was instituted to meet the needs of the rapidly changing society and for the innovation of teacher education; it was needed for producing highly qualified talents, and for deepening the university's reform for improving education for the new teachers. In the ensuing years, Yangtze Normal University set up several guidelines for regulating the teaching plans of each degree program and for administration of credits acquired for undergraduate students for successful completion of their studies. Most informants viewed the adoption of the new credit system as a significant enhancement for teacher education reform in terms of more flexibilities and opportunities for students' learning.

Strengthening the Teaching Workforce and Its Management

To improve its teaching quality, Yangtze Normal University took substantial

actions to strengthen the teaching workforce and its management. In 2003, the university held a special meeting on the teaching force. About 230 administrators and faculty from all over the campus gathered together to discuss how to recruit qualified new faculty members and how to retain the current faculty. Two critical policies, i.e., *the University's Opinions on further Strengthening the Faculty Workforce* and *the University Plan of Faculty Workforce Construction in 2003-2008*, were enforced after the meeting.

On the other hand, Yangtze Normal University tightened the management process for ensuring the high teaching quality. For example, from 2000-2005, 64 regulatory documents were issued, focusing on teaching regulations and administration. Key regulations included *the University Opinions on Enhancing Undergraduate Teaching for Improving Teaching Quality* and *the University's Opinions on further Enhancing Student Internship* in 2002, *the University's Opinions on further Strengthening the Quality Monitoring of Undergraduate Teaching*, *the Regulations on Faculty's Teaching Work* and *the University's Regulations on Teaching Administration* in 2004. Comprehensive teaching reforms were also introduced in such degree programs as chemistry, biology, law, sociology, college English, college physical education, etc. Central to these experiments was tightening the management of teaching.

To enhance the quality of teaching, the university has adopted new quantifiable indicators to measure teachers' job performance. This is a major step. Before, universities in China never conducted evaluation on teachers, and Yangtze Normal University was no exception. Hence, some informants were proud of these measures because Yangtze Normal University was among the few pioneering universities that adopted this change in China. These measures, routinely undertaken at the end of each semester, evaluated

teachers' job performance in classroom teaching and research by a list of quantifiable indicators. For example, the measures on teachers' classroom performance covered a wide range of indicators from teaching aims, to teaching attitudes and preparation, to teaching methods and teaching effectiveness. The assessment forms were generally filled out by students and administrators.

The university leaders viewed these quantifiable measures to serve the goal of strengthening the teaching workforce and its management. They were taken as rational steps to set high standards for the assurance of teaching quality. These strategies and actions, especially in the recently enforced quantifiable measures for assessing teachers' job performance, however, were viewed by faculty (participants) as leaders' legitimate instruments to oppress them, for they were pressured against their choice to respond to these instrumental measures initiated by dominant powers, as Aronowitz and Giroux criticized (1993, p. 50). Prof. Ningdong reported that the real purposes of these quantifiable measures were solely to determine if a faculty could be promoted or not in the future. For example, the university set 85% as the eligible grade for the promotion to full professor. If a faculty who was applying for the position of full professor earned only a grade of 84%, her/his application would be denied no matter how excellent her/his other job performance was. This was called as "one vote vetoes all" (*yipiao foujue*). On the contrary, the university did not have any similar measures to evaluate the job performance of leaders and administrators.

Upgrading Teaching Facilities and Improving Learning Environment

In recent years, Yangtze Normal University has invested a huge sum of money to upgrade its teaching facilities and infrastructure to create a better learning environment

for students. Since 1999, the university has invested more than 66 million RMB²¹ in upgrading its teaching facilities. The university now has more than 102 multimedia classrooms, 26 newly finished teaching labs, 11 newly finished computer teaching rooms and 67 newly established bases for internship.

To create a better learning environment for prospective teachers, Yangtze Normal University has recently tripled its campus size to a total of 550 acres with a total construction area of 16 million square feet. The newly constructed campus space provided students and faculty a comfortable and convenient learning and living area with modern design and look. As planned, on the new campus alone up to 30,000 students will pursue their learning opportunities there.

Anping, the Chair of the Department of Educational Technologies, observed that IT applications in his department were remarkably expanded for improving the efficiency and quality of classroom teaching. He also noted that the status and resources of his department were considerably enhanced because of the university's decision to upgrade its teaching facilities and improve the learning environment in the implementation of the national policy.

Many faculty informants believed that Yangtze Normal University had made as many rational efforts as it could have for the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform. However, they also believed that the teaching quality and the preparation of teachers in the university were not necessarily enhanced by these efforts. For example, the new programs may not have addressed the new roles and identities of

²¹ The exchange rate of RMB and the US dollars has been kept constant as around 8:1 since the 1990s to 2005.

teachers as professional learners/researchers, or as transformative intellectuals. Rather, the quantifiable measurements, focusing on numbers more than on student learning experience and other non-quantifiable ways to promote teaching excellence, have reinforced the traditional roles of teachers as a technical instrument for transmitting factual knowledge to students.

In fact, some faculty informants seriously doubted the effectiveness of these strategies and actions adopted for the implementation of the national policy. For instance, Prof. Peishi shared his critical concerns about how the above strategies and actions were severely mitigated by the political tensions and adverse factors in the implementation process. In his view, the political tensions and adverse factors were many: the overemphasis on quantifiable measurements to evaluate teachers' work; the radical expansion of student enrollment since the late 1990s; and the decline in quality of the newly admitted students, etc.

Strengthening the Distinguishing Feature of Teacher Education

As a normal university, Yangtze Normal University took advantage of its featured teacher education programs to meet the requirements of the implementation of the national policy. After the credit system was adopted, a big change was made for students in terms of taking teacher education courses. The ratio of teacher education courses required of undergraduate students jumped from six percent up to sixteen percent in the total required credits for a Bachelor's degree. In Yangtze Normal University, this was a key step to enhance teacher education and teacher professionalism through the implementation of the national policy.

Like any other normal universities in China, Yangtze Normal University has

historically provided required core courses in teacher education as a trio: General Introduction of Education, Psychology, and Disciplinary Teaching Methodology. The teaching contents were usually edited by some senior educational researchers. Now the university has upgraded the contents and requirements of teacher education courses. For example, the General Introduction of Education as a general introduction to education for all undergraduate students in teacher education programs used to consist of four major components adopted from the Kairov's model: basic theories, pedagogy, moral education and school administration. Now the four components have been replaced with new components such as the relationship of teachers and students, society and education, modern learning theories, etc.

Besides the traditional trio of General Introduction of Education, Psychology, and Disciplinary Teaching Methodology, the university has started the fourth required core course: Educational Technologies. This new required core course was a significant gesture aiming at enhancement of teacher quality in response to the rapid IT development in the world.

In addition, in the same year of 2003 when the credit system was adopted, Yangtze Normal University decided to expand teacher education courses with more options, aiming to expand students' knowledge horizon. Apart from the first category of subject core courses such as physical education, foreign language, computer science and political theory which were required by the Ministry of Education, the university provided additional core courses based on the broad disciplines in social science and science. The College of Educational Science provided such new core courses in teacher education as Educational Evaluation, Learning Methodology for Undergraduate Students,

Psychological Health Education for College Students, Educational Statistics, Learning Theory, and Methodology of Educational Research. In addition to making available more choices of teacher education courses for prospective teachers, new inservice training programs were recently started or added for school teachers, principals and administrators of high schools, as noted by Prof. Mawei who was a recently retired senior professor.

Dean Hengtang pointed out the strand of new teacher education courses in Yangtze Normal University would never have come into being if it were not for the implementation of the national policy. Still, some faculty informants viewed this strategy as insufficient to enhance student learning in teacher education. While the university viewed the strategy as a rational choice for the implementation of the national policy by taking advantage of its featured teacher education programs, most interviewees saw it as a political tactic leaders adopted for the narrow purpose of promoting the status of the College of Educational Science, as well as those who majored in the field of education, rather than fulfilling the lofty goal of improving the level of teacher education as outlined in the national policy.

Restructuring Academic Departments for Teacher Education

Early in 1992, Yangtze Normal University was authorized by the Provincial Department of Education to establish the School of Adult Education which was the first school of continuing education in Yangtze province. It was the university's first attempt to reorganize academic departments for teacher education since the 1990s. In the year of 2002, Yangtze Normal University underwent a radical reorganization of its academic departments. In all, seven colleges were established to adapt to the new demands arising from the radically changing society in China.

As introduced in Chapter Six, the College of Educational Science was founded in the year of 2000, by merging the Department of Educational Technology, the Institute of Higher Education and the Department of Educational Science. Since 2004, Yangtze Normal University has planned for the establishment of the new College of Teacher Education based on the current College of Educational Science. The new College of Teacher Education was being planned to accommodate all the programs related to teacher education on campus, including the programs of discipline-based teaching theories from each department of the campus. As proposed by *the Plan of Establishing the College of Teacher Education of Yangtze Normal University*, the new College of Teacher Education aims to meet the overall requirements of the national policy of teacher education reform and serves as one of the national bases in teacher education. The central government was expected to invest huge financial resources once it is approved.

Most informants of this study, such as Chair Anping and Prof. Ningdong, Ouying and Peishi, saw the establishment of the College of Educational Science and the current planning for the new College of Teacher Education as an optimization of powers (*qiangqiang lianhe*) which was to generate a new “superpower” to improve the quality of teacher education at Yangtze Normal University. Dean Hengtang, however, harbored a deep concern that the new College of Teacher Education may not necessarily lead to the improvement of the quality of teacher education at Yangtze Normal University, as the building of a culture of excellence takes a long time.

The restructuring of academic departments for teacher education was adopted by Yangtze Normal University as the rational choice to facilitate an optimization of academic powers for the implementation of the national policy. Beyond the lofty goals,

however, leaders, administrators and faculty in the College of Educational Science have taken advantage of the university's institutional strategy to raise their political and economic status on campus. The next section will focus on how their political and economic status was improved in the implementation process of the national policy.

From enhancing teaching, to restructuring academic departments for teacher education, Yangtze Normal University has adopted new, significant institutional strategies and actions for the implementation of the national policy. The effectiveness of these institutional strategies and actions, however, was challenged by many informants, including most faculty informants. Prof. Peishi criticized the university's strategies for the implementation of the national policy as a typical act of formalism:

Simply put, [the major strategy] is nothing but moves to follow upper level administrative orders. That is, these strategies are made by following exactly what the central government requires. Here is an issue related to political studies. Let's first put aside the argument that the administrative order is rational or not, and just assume the administrative order itself is rational, but how much of it will be implemented? In my opinion, there is more said than done.

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE IMPLEMENTATION

The national policy of teacher education reform has been in effect for more than a decade on the campus of Yangtze Normal University. There were remarkable institutional changes such as the setup of new degree programs, the systematic transformation from the traditional academic-year system to the credit system, the adoption of a quantitative system to measure teaching performance, the strengthening of the distinguishing feature of teacher education, and so forth. In addition, Yangtze Normal University extensively reorganized its academic departments, largely upgraded its teaching facilities and

infrastructure, and considerably expanded its campus for more educational capacity. Apart from the above visible changes, there were also institutional measures to improve the social status and public image of Yangtze Normal University. Unfortunately, as perceived by most implementers and participants, the university's social status and public image have in fact dropped.

Chair Caifei observed that Yangtze Normal University was no longer among the four most prestigious universities in Yangtze province. He compared his university with other prestigious universities in four dimensions, i.e., public funding, leadership and administration, academic strengths, and campus location. He concluded that the university had lagged behind others in all of the four dimensions. Director Gangyang added that the quality decline of undergraduate teaching explained why the university had lagged behind:

The reasons may be multiple. The biggest contribution probably is the decline of undergraduate teaching quality. As we have talked about just now, there are many reasons to explain why the teaching quality of undergraduate is declining: It may be the radical expansion of recruitment, the low quality of the new students, the decline of investment in teacher workforce, etc. Thus, the whole social status [of Yangtze Normal University] is declining somewhat. The indicators of decline can be explained by some operational statistics, I think.

Director Gangyang continued:

One most relevant indicator is that the quality of the applicants to Yangtze Normal University is declining. Now it's impossible to keep a ratio of admitting one student out of five or more applicants which is what we used to have in student recruitment. Rather, the ratio has been declining to one out of three or two....The data means that the social status and public image of Yangtze Normal University have significantly dropped. Another [indicator] is the employment rate of our graduates. I'll say that, in terms of quantity and quality, the graduates of Yangtze Normal University do not have a high rate of acceptance in the job market. This also means that the social status and public image of Yangtze Normal University has dropped.

Most informants concurred with Chair Caifei and Director Gangyang, but some other

informants had different perceptions. For example, Prof. Ningdong noted that:

I feel that the social status of our university is actually rising overall. Of course, there are some traditional reasons for our positive image [such as the university is historically prestigious], but it has something to do with the promotion of teacher education by the national policy.

Different from the university's social status and public image which were deemed to be declining by most informants, all of the informants viewed that the establishment of the College of Educational Science and the planning for the new College of Teacher Education as having promoted their institutional and personal status on campus. For instance, Chair Beihua remarked that his department would not even be noticed on the university campus if there were no such implementation of the national policy. Chair Caifei added that both the social and financial status of the college was significantly improved. As the national policy of teacher education reform required higher qualifications or certificates for the teaching profession, the College of Educational Science provided several regular training programs for school teachers, principals and administrators, and fees charged for registering in these programs significantly benefited the college from an economic point of view. Prof. Ningdong shared:

On the actual benefits earned, one is that the courses in teacher education have been increased,²² though not enough. The biggest benefit brought to our college by the recent reform of teacher education is the pecuniary condition....Since 1995, the whole pecuniary condition of our college as a collective unit has been the best [on campus], and no other colleges can compare that with us on that.

²² A professor's salary in China's higher education institutions generally consists of three major parts: regular official salary from the government budget; stable post subsidy from the institutional financial sources, and flexible bonus earned by her/his teaching activities/research grant. A professor usually earns extra money including remuneration and bonus based on how many courses they give to students and how much they bring in through research grants. Generally, more courses and/or more research grants mean more bonuses to faculty members (please also refer to Footnote 26 in Chapter 9, pp. 214-215). In the case of the College of Educational Science, a professor's annual bonus was commonly equivalent to the total sum of her/his regular official salary and post subsidy. This proportion was considered as normal in most higher education institutions in China nowadays.

Obviously, the College of Educational Science took advantage of the implementation of the national policy to change its political and economic status in Yangtze Normal University, while the university established it as a rational choice to optimize its teaching resources of teacher education for the implementation of the national policy. Still, there were some informants who continued to complain that the status improvement of the College of Educational Science was not enough, as compared with that of similar colleges at other provincial key normal universities.

EVALUATIONS ON THE OUTCOMES OF THE IMPLEMENTATION

Evaluation is a critical process, which provides feedback for the implementation of policy and policy revision (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980, p. 542). Yangtze Normal University employed an official evaluation system to evaluate the implementation outcomes of the national policy. This section examines how these official evaluations were put into practice and how personal accounts from our informants differed from them.

Official Evaluations on the Outcomes of the Implementation

Generally, there were three major official forms of evaluation on the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform in Yangtze Normal University. One form of the university official evaluation system performed was an annual comprehensive review of leaders/administrators' overall performance (*shuzhi ceping dahui*). Another form was the university-performed regular or sporadic evaluations on some special categories of job performance such as teaching quality or research. The third form was through ad hoc evaluations conducted by the provincial or

state departments of education.

The first form of official evaluations was an annual evaluation of the overall job performance of the university leaders and administrators, including presidents, CPC secretaries, directors of offices, college deans, etc. Because the system was to evaluate the job performance of leaders/administrators, it can be viewed by extension as an official evaluation on the implementation of the national policy. Generally, the evaluations were directed and organized by the Provincial Department of Education on a yearly basis. The university chronicle of events recorded that several official evaluation meetings were held for the university leaders and administrators at college level and university level on Dec. 10-11, 2003 and on Apr. 15, 2005, respectively. In the 2005 evaluation on leaders' work performance, all department chairs, college deans/CPC secretaries, office directors/CPC secretaries, and presidents/CPC secretaries were required to attend the evaluation meeting. Various quantifiable survey forms were provided for them to evaluate the overall performance of each leader.

The university official evaluation system on leaders/administrators' job performances was criticized as "not being really vigorous," as Chair Anping put it. That meant that the evaluation was usually just a political show, instead of being a real evaluation. Chair Anping also observed that this kind of evaluation had lost its original authentic meaning and was merely a kind of formality. In his critical view, this form of official evaluations on leader/administrator's job performance was a complete waste of time and effort.

The second form of official evaluations was the regular or occasional evaluations on some special categories of job performance at Yangtze Normal University. It was

usually organized or conducted by such administration offices as the Office of Teaching Affairs. For research, some quantifiable measures were emphasized such as the numbers of publications and the numbers of research projects. For teaching, there were also quantifiable and monitoring measures. For instance, the Office of Teaching Affairs has been constantly monitoring teachers' classroom teaching. In 2004, the office publicized *the Opinion on further Enhancing the Quality Monitoring of Teaching for Undergraduates*. According *the University Newsletter of Teaching Affairs*, from Nov. 24 to Dec. 2, the Office of Teaching Affairs organized a campus-wide inspection and evaluation on teaching at Yangtze Normal University. The official evaluations of special categories of job performance were criticized by some faculty informants as an additional job pressure put on faculty, producing more paperwork and imposing more rigid procedures on them. Prof. Laimin complained that he had personally been given official evaluations on both his teaching and research.

The third form of official evaluations was conducted by an ad hoc committee organized by the administrative departments of education at provincial or national level. Generally, this form of official evaluation was not held regularly, but it could be very political and powerful. Most informants had a fresh impression on it, for Yangtze Normal University had been scheduled in 2008 for the Undergraduate Teaching Assessment on Higher Education Institutions by the Ministry of Education. The National Teaching Assessment and its negative impact on the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform will be detailed later in Chapter Nine.

Viewed from rational perspective, the above three forms of official evaluations were supposed to serve as powerful and effective tools for providing accurate feedbacks

for the implementation and adjustment of the national policy, but none of them actually functioned in that way. On the contrary, most informants critically viewed it as having played a negative role thereby offsetting the effectiveness of the implementation process of the national policy.

Personal Accounts on the Outcomes of the Implementation

All informants were asked about their personal evaluations on the outcomes of the implementation of the national policy. Four of them responded with a positive view, as Dean Kaiyue put: “The implementation of the national policy in recent years is promising and our college is growing rapidly.” Another leader was also quite optimistic: “it [the outcome] should be positive....we have made a lot of progress in this, though our strides are still not big enough.” Prof. Ningdong had the same feeling too:

My overall judgment tends to be positive. I felt that our university and college had changed a lot to adapt to the market economy. I should say that they are positive acts. A benign, positive judgment should be given to its outcome.

However, most other informants tended to be negative or at least conservative on the outcomes of the implementation of the national policy. Vice President Jiqiang concluded that the implementation has resulted in an overall regression in teaching and research quality. Similarly, Chair Beihua was very negative about the implementation, but he viewed it as the only way to change the status quo. Prof. Ouying showed her serious concerns about the outcomes of the implementation:

In 1983 when I first worked here, our university had a nice ranking nationwide – we had similar ranking with N Normal University – but now we have lagged behind too far. The whole situation in China is reform and opening, yet it seems that we have never been open, and we are still closed....I think there is something wrong, but I cannot tell what exactly the problem is.

When asked if the implementation of the national policy had positive or negative impact

on preparing schoolteachers, she answered without any hesitation: “More negative, less positive. Although there are both negative and positive, I believe the negative part is stronger.”

An add-on interview question asked the informants to make a comparison of Yangtze Normal University with other provincial key normal universities in the implementation of the national policy. Six informants noted that Yangtze Normal University lagged behind others somewhat, whereas four out of the seventeen informants insisted that they were at the same level of the implementation. There were two major reasons for those who believed that Yangtze Normal University lagged behind. One was that the local economic level of development was lower than that of its neighbors, and thus significantly constrained the implementation of the national policy by the university. The other was that the working environment and conservative administration in Yangtze Normal University discouraged the retention of young faculty members.

From the personal accounts of most informants, the implementation of the national policy in Yangtze Normal University was definitely not satisfactory. Basically, it did not adhere to the national policy of teacher education reform, which had urged higher teacher education institutions to “stick to the main theme of development, to the main thread of structure adjustment, and to strengthen the advantages and features of normal universities/colleges for teacher education” (The MOE, 2002, February 6). The next chapter will explain how the outcomes of the implementation of the national policy were actually affected by some unfavorable/adverse factors as well as environmental barriers.

When looking into the stakeholders’ involvement in the implementation process in Yangtze Normal University, we clearly see high political tensions and conflicts between

the implementers and the participants, although they were required to work together to achieve the same institutional goals. To fulfill the implementation requirements of the national policy, Yangtze Normal University took major strategies and alternatives, adopting a wide range of efforts for enhancing teaching, strengthening the distinguishing feature of teacher education and restructuring academic departments for teacher education. The institutional changes brought about by the implementation of the national policy were also significant. In addition, Yangtze Normal University employed what it believed to be the most efficient evaluation system to evaluate the outcomes of the implementation. But the institutional strategies and changes were viewed by stakeholders differently. They viewed these strategies and the official evaluations as ineffective, unable to achieve their respective intentions assumed by the university leaders. The next chapter will further probe how stakeholders' attitudes and adverse institutional constraints and barriers have hampered or backfired on the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform in Yangtze Normal University.

CHAPTER 9

STAKEHOLDERS' ATTITUDES AND INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL POLICY

As stated in Chapter Four, the characteristics of the implementation agency and institutional conditions are among the major factors that play key roles in the success or failure of the implementation of a policy (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975, p. 474). This chapter inquires into and explains major adverse factors in Yangtze Normal University and institutional confluence of other national policy actions or factors which affected the outcomes of the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform in Yangtze Normal University.

ADVERSE FACTORS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL POLICY

The adverse factors in Yangtze Normal University included the university leaders' weak awareness of the national policy, the declining quality of teaching and research, the constraints and problems embedded in the official-centered bureaucracy, the negative perceptions and attitudes of stakeholders toward the national policy, and so on. All of them together converged to negatively affect the implementation of the

national policy of teacher education reform at Yangtze Normal University.

Leaders' Weak Awareness of the National Policy

Although the national policy of teacher education reform has been in effect at Yangtze Normal University for over a decade, the university leaders had not fully comprehended its importance – at least most informants believed so. The implementation of the national policy was a comprehensive institutional reconstruction that requires every step of policy actions to be executed consciously to enhance the professional training and development of teacher education students. For example, teaching internship was traditionally viewed as a crucial step in teacher preparation in Yangtze Normal University. It used to take two to three months for teacher education students to practice their knowledge and teaching skills on site under the supervision of faculty advisors. Yet, in implementing the national policy of teacher education reform, the university leaders did not take any tangible actions to ensure the traditional requirement of internship for teacher education students remain intact, instead they lowered the standards for it. Consequently, many informants insisted that the teaching skills and practical capacities of students have not been developed appropriately. According to Chair Beihua, except for increasing the requirements of teacher education courses for all students on campus, the university leaders had not taken action to ensure the implementation of the national policy in any substantial way.

Director Gangyang witnessed that the critical role of teacher education was not fully understood by the university leaders in their administration to improve the quality of future teachers. The status of teacher education in the university was in

reality inadequate. To change this situation, he admitted that Rome was not built in a day. In his view, a complete reform from updating the university mission to course planning was necessary to substantially change the status quo in Yangtze Normal University.

Some informants realized that the university leaders' understanding of teacher education was outdated and this contributed to the ineffective implementation of the national policy at Yangtze Normal University. Chair Beihua suggested that the first thing the university leaders needed to do was to update their understanding of teacher education:

This is something related to the professionalism of a president [of a normal university]. Teachers are required to be professionals, thus a president must be a professional first. All will be empty talk, if a president is not a professional who does not learn something about educational theories or is incapable of teacher training and administration. The president of a normal university, according to Tao Xingzhi, should be a first-rate educator. Do we have any? At least I am not able to find any here in Yangtze province.

In addition to the university leaders' inappropriate comprehension of the national policy of teacher education reform, there were certain environmental influences that distracted their attention and energy. For example, the university leaders were most often busy with fund-raising and campus expansion activities for the university – two top priorities for university presidents in China due to decentralization of educational funding which means universities have to find a large amount of funding for themselves, and the need for competing with other universities to increase enrollment. Needless to say, the university leaders' low awareness of the national policy of teacher education with their dominant roles in the implementation process justifies the critical interrogations.

The Declining Quality of Teaching and Research

It was commonly agreed among the informants that the quality of teaching and research in Yangtze Normal University had dropped considerably, since the implementation of the national policy of higher education expansion in the late 1990s. The significant lowering of the requirements for teaching internship for teacher education students serves as strong evidence that teaching quality was declining in Yangtze Normal University. Many leaders as well as faculty had serious concerns about the deteriorating situation of teaching.

Another indication on the decline of teaching quality can be found at the College of Educational Science. The College of Educational Science had a faculty of 90 fulltime members working in five departments that had an enrollment of around 2,000 students. The faculty-student ratio was 1:22, a dramatic increase from 1:4 in the early 1990s. In addition, the class sizes of teacher education courses have also significantly increased in recent years. For example, in the 1980s, the class size usually ranged from 35 to 45 students. But by the time field work for this study was conducted in the fall of 2005, the class sizes of teacher education courses generally ranged from 65 to 120 students. Professors have to give courses in classrooms with microphones. They also have very limited time for carefully reading and commenting on students' term papers.

The high faculty-student ratio and larger class sizes put professors in Yangtze Normal University under high pressure and significantly increased their teaching workload. For example, the high faculty-student ratio required that professors taught courses at least more than ten hours a week to meet the university's basic

requirements, and professors had to teach much more than ten hours a week in order to earn the extra income beyond their base salary. Under this kind of economic and political pressures, it is not uncommon to see a professor running back and forth teaching two to three courses a day. In addition, professors in the College of Educational Science had to give courses outside of campus to earn additional bonus. In all, faculty's teaching load at the College of Educational Science was much heavier than it used to be.

Under the pressure of heavy teaching workload, Chair Daijing lamented:

Now what are we worried about? The new situation demands them [faculty] to teach so many courses. It's extremely difficult for them to ensure good quality in teaching. How can they have the energy to ensure teaching quality while they have to prepare for so many courses?

The university/college leaders were no doubt embarrassed by the dilemma.

They did not have many options: there must be somebody teaching courses in the classrooms. There were too many students awaiting for classes due to the rapid expansion of student enrollment in recent years. Worse than that, the sizes of some class have been doubled or tripled up to 120 students in one big classroom. The effectiveness of teaching was severely affected and the interactions between professors and students in classrooms became limited.

In addition to the decline of teaching quality, the quality of faculty's academic research simultaneously went downhill. There have been many discussions of research corruption in China. One type of research corruption was that most professors were reluctant to do any research. Rather, they just wore the cap of a researcher yet what they did was nothing but teaching more courses to make money, on campus or outside of campus. Another type of the research corruption was

academic falsifications. Prof. Mawei and Chair Daijing gave some examples in the College of Educational Science. It was known at least two to three associate professors had hired substitute writers to write journal papers for them in order to get promoted. This kind of academic falsification was not limited to the College of Educational Science at Yangtze Normal University. In fact, there have been many cases of academic falsifications in China's higher education institutions as reported by the mass media in recent years. They have happened in top-ranking national key universities such as Peking University, Tsinghua University, Zhejiang University, Fudan University, and Southeast University. Similar cases were also found commonly among other higher education institutions, and what have not been revealed may be worse.

There were many reasons contributing to the decline in the quality of teaching and research at Yangtze Normal University. The larger context of a transitional economy where money reigns, problems in the faculty promotion and rank system, and the income allocation system, all contributed to teachers' low job motivations and performance. For instance, Yangtze Normal University adopted a strategy that linked income allocation with teachers' workload for teaching. That meant a professor would earn more bonus if s/he offered more courses, as long as her/his teaching quality was maintained at a reasonable level. If a professor did not teach courses at all in a semester, s/he would not get the bonus. In this situation, as Vice President Jiqiang and Dean Kaiyue observed, professors generally wanted to give as many courses as they could to earn bonuses which were equivalent to their regular salaries. In addition, some teachers tended to teach additional courses or take consulting jobs outside of

campus to earn more. Dean Enwei added that teachers' heavy workload limited their opportunities, time and energy to expand their academic capacities and to improve their teaching methods and skills.

All these behaviors dramatically diverted teachers' attention and diluted their energy, and consequently sacrificed the quality of their teaching and research.

Director Futang criticized that the income allocation system had been abused by the university administrators as a practical and legitimate instrument to control and exploit the faculty on campus. Unfortunately, students became the direct victims of the declining quality of teaching and research. Therefore, the declining quality of teaching and research negated the fruits from the implementation of the national policy the goals of which were, ironically, "to build up a highly qualified teacher workforce" (The MOE, 2002, February 6).

The Constraints and Problems Embedded in the Official-Centered Bureaucracy

The official-centered bureaucracy (*guan benwei*) refers to the bureaucratic system which traditionally gives government officials high privileges in terms of socioeconomic status and political power in Chinese society.²³ Traditional Chinese culture is featured with the official-centered bureaucracy. The major features of the official-centered bureaucracy are that officials are deemed as authorities in governance, upholding social justice and playing key roles in the society; and officials have predominant political and economic power in the societal network of relationships. As a result, Chinese people usually give heavy weight to the values of

²³ For further information about the official-centered bureaucracy in Chinese culture, please refer to: Qi, X. S. (2002). Guanbenwei yishi de lishi chengyin ji duice [On the origins and countermeasures of the concept of official-centered bureaucracy]. *Journal of Literature, History and Philosophy*, 2, pp. 147-150.

being officials and many Chinese people including intellectuals dream of climbing up to high government positions as their career goals.

The official-centered bureaucracy may bear some advantages for policy implementation. For example, it may help build high consensus among implementers for adopting the policy goals and taking effective actions, as may be seen by Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) as an advantage to maximize the amount of policy change (p. 460).²⁴ The official-centered bureaucracy, however, does not always facilitate the policy implementation process in modern society. In fact, it has become the biggest problem and challenge for the implementation of the national policy of teacher education in Yangtze Normal University, as nine out of the seventeen informants commented. It is bureaucratic, inefficient and breeds too many special interests and favoritism.

High Political/Economic Tensions between Administrators and Faculty

The official-centered bureaucracy allowed the leaders or administrators to enjoy overwhelming authoritative power in the implementation of the national policy, resulting in high political and economic tensions between the implementers and participants. Policies implemented within the context of the official-centered bureaucracy served to reinforce the system of political and economic inequality in the implementation process. For example, it has enhanced the status quo of inequality in Yangtze Normal University. Generally, personnel in Yangtze Normal University consisted of three groups: faculty, administrators and staff. According to most informants, the largest trunk of the subsidies in Yangtze Normal University was

²⁴ Please refer to Figure 4.3 in Chapter 4 (p. 122).

allocated to leaders or administrators. Director Futang used the example of a cake to vividly describe the disproportionately allocated subsidies between the administrators and faculty. He reported that more than 70% or even 80% of the cake had gone to university leaders or administrators, while faculty usually got only 20% to 30%.

Most faculty participants had experienced mistreatments in the university's income allocation system. To protest, some of them loudly criticized the unequal income allocation system on the university bulletin board system (BBS): Is the university an educational institution or an old yamen? ²⁵ The fact was that there were a total of more than 2,800 personnel in the university, but faculty members were only around 1,050, including those who were called as *shuangjian tiao*, who held a concurrent post as an administrator and a professor. Most people working at Yangtze Normal University were administrators and staff. In other words, the administrators and staff were eating up largely what the faculty earned.

To illustrate, there were many more hidden benefits for administrators than for faculty, and those hidden benefits were always guaranteed in terms of perks and bonuses. The hidden benefits the leaders and administrators enjoyed included large sum of money diverted from public fund for personal use, legitimate and/or illegitimate reimbursement of daily expenditures such as monthly cell phone bills, meal and transportation subsidies, stable post subsidies (*gangwei jintie*),²⁶ and

²⁵ Yamen is an administration office and building in ancient China, and typically refers to the office or residence of a county magistrate. The term is still commonly used nowadays as a symbolic connotation referring to the officials' or administrators' dominant political and economic power in social life.

²⁶ In addition to regular official salaries from government budget, the post subsidies are commonly an additional regular income in most public institutions in China. The post subsidies are generally extra money earned collectively by an institution, and are allocated to

significantly more opportunities for receiving research grants, etc. The post subsidies enjoyed by administrators made up more than 35% of their total salaries, whereas faculty did not have any such post subsidies in Yangtze Normal University. Faculty had to live on the regular official salaries which were only able to cover their daily expenditures for living in Yangtze Province. They usually chose to give more courses to earn extra bonus for a better living.

In 2004, faculty's salary grew by ten percent which was faster than that of administrators. Officially, this meant that the university has prioritized teaching. In reality, however, the administrators had made much more than the faculty through various hidden benefits. When talking about the rapid growth of salary, five out of the six professors interviewed had the same view: "Faculty's actual income is generally much lower than administrators'." Prof. Mawei testified that in 2002, the total income of a college dean or a CPC secretary was two to three times more than that of an ordinary professor. Prof. Ouying jokingly used a metaphor to describe the real sociopolitical status of teachers in Yangtze Normal University under the official-centered bureaucratic culture. Below was the piece of the interview conversation:

Q: I have heard that the distribution of extra income, especially bonus, is not fair to teachers. Does it affect teachers' job motivation if it is true?

A: I used to make a joking metaphor – this was a joke five years ago and is still being quoted – that is, the social status of teachers in Yangtze Normal University is like that of peasants in China's society.

Q: Is it exaggerated?

A: Absolutely not at all. In China, why are peasants not able to get rich? This is

its members in a certain amount according to their corresponding positions in the institution. Many universities in China have provided the post subsidies to both administrators and faculty, but Yangtze Normal University was an exception. It did provide the post subsidies for its leaders/administrators, but not for its faculty. Professors had to earn bonus by giving courses or receiving research grants (please also refer to Footnote 22 in Chapter 8, p. 199).

not because peasants are not diligent workers. Peasants are generally overworked everyday and create a lot of social wealth, but they are only able to get back very limited rewards for themselves. Everybody who lives on what peasants have created exploits them in the form of tax or fees, including educational tax and tuitions. And even worse, peasants do not have any voices in the process of government policymaking. Thus, peasants become the lowest class in the Chinese society. We teachers in Yangtze Normal University unfortunately share that similar status. Well, we do get some remuneration for our course teaching, but this is only a very small bit of student fees. The administrators get the most....The reform in recent years has greatly widened the gap.

Professors were greatly discouraged by the income gap, but also took it as a political opportunity for actions to struggle against the unequal reality of the official-centered bureaucracy. Director Futang noted:

Every administrator has around twenty thousand RMB as their annual post subsidy besides their regular official salary, whereas faculty do not have any post subsidy. Under such a circumstance, teachers started launching public opinions to resist the status quo. As they say, since we don't have any post subsidy, we don't have any responsibilities either. The action can be actually viewed as a fight back.

The public opinions adopted by faculty as strategy of struggles have changed their economic status in the university to a certain extent. For example, fearing that faculty may not support their claims of achievement at the time the MOE's Undergraduate Teaching Assessment on Higher Education Institutions is being performed,²⁷ the university leaders began to consider adjusting the income allocation plan, i.e., setting up post subsidies for faculty too. The victory faculty finally won required courage, for they might be placed in great disadvantages, as the struggle invariably may threaten their jobs hence their living by taking on the leaders.

In addition to the serious economic tension between leaders/administrators and faculty, there were also serious political tensions and conflicts between the two major

²⁷ The MOE's Undergraduate Teaching Assessment on Higher Education Institutions will be detailed later in this chapter.

groups of stakeholders. For example, according to the legislations of higher education administration, the university leaders of Yangtze Normal University was required to be voted by the representatives from various groups on campus through an official institutional process. However, in reality, this process was always manipulated as an operation in black box, with total disregard for “the rights of voters”. Many professors were very angry at the superficiality of the black box process, and took a political strategy of disobedience to struggle against the unjust status quo. Chair Inling narrated how she adopted the political strategy to invalidate the legitimacy of the official voting process in this way:

The official process for voting for a leader in our university seems to be very democratic. For example, it will allow us to vote, and to participate. But who knows how these leaders are voted in. Are they really voted in by the public? I know I have the right to vote but the final choosing of a university leader has really nothing to do with me. Everybody knows it. We all know our vote is useless. Therefore, we just take it easy – we just randomly pick up any name on the ballot and check one. I know my careless vote may have a negative impact on those who were selected “secretly” in the black box.

Different from Chair Inling’s strategy of political disobedience, some faculty members adopted collective bargaining as a political strategy to fight against the unfair treatments they received in the university. For instance, in 2005, the university leaders and administrators launched a new round of reform on health insurance, aiming at reducing the university insurance expenditures by cutting down most faculty’s benefits of health insurance. Some senior faculty members, including those who were retired, collectively signed protest letters expressing their deep concerns about the reform on health insurance to the Provincial Department of Education and the Provincial Congress of the CPC. Afterwards, the Provincial Department of Education and the Provincial Congress of the CPC gave a high pressure on the

university leaders. Finally, the reform of health insurance in Yangtze Normal University was postponed endlessly.

Many informants also believed that the biggest problem in the implementation of the national policy was the university's frustrating academic environment embedded in the official-centered bureaucracy. It rendered teachers unable to focus on teaching or research, for many teachers wanted to earn a better political status on campus by getting involved in administration instead of teaching or research. In addition, the official-centered bureaucracy had a negative impact on teachers' autonomy and academic freedom, in that the administrators had the political and economic power to control a faculty's job, and the faculty would feel threatened if s/he does not follow the orders passed down by the leaders and administrators.

It is obvious that faculty in Yangtze Normal University have taken some collective measures to "transform the fundamental nature of the conditions under which they work" (Giroux, 1988, p. xxxii). The high political/economic tensions between administrators and faculty showed that political conflicts were universal in the implementation process of a policy. These tensions served as problems as well as opportunities for marginalized or oppressed groups to fight for their own political rights and benefits.

Red Tape and Formalism in the Implementation Process

Another major manifestation of the official-centered bureaucracy was red tape and formalism in the implementation process. In rigid conformity to administrative regulations, red tape generally implies unnecessary official paperwork, requirements or procedures, while formalism places emphasis on formality over substance or

practical content in administration or policy actions. Usually, they go as twins, and commonly focus on excessive political shows instead of seeking meaningful practical outcomes.

Chair Anping, Vice President Jiqiang and prof. Mawei reported that formalism and red tape were a big issue in the implementation process of the national policy. Prof. Ningdong gave his own experience as an example: He spent two months to get his textbook printed through the official process required by the university Office of Teaching Affairs. He complained that the job could have been done within a day by himself yet he was not allowed to do so.

Many informants were pathetic to the formalism and red tape repeatedly occurring in the policy actions on campus. Prof. Peishi detailed his perceptions as below:

The university is guided by bureaucracy. To what extent it's guided by bureaucracy? Our days are taken over by policy documents, for nowadays all the administrative offices in the university incline to issue policy documents one after another. Once a policy document is released, you have to do something within a very limited timeframe: Today the policy document is issued and tomorrow you are required to finish that job.

Obviously, formalism and red tape permeated in the implementation process of the national policy in Yangtze Normal University. Prof. Peishi critically reviewed how formalism and red tape went against the implementation of the national policy:

Leaders have been holding meetings all the time to show that they have started the implementation of the national policy, or in their viewpoint they have done what they are required to do. In fact, they have done little beyond holding more meetings. What do they hold so many meetings for? It means that "I [as a university leader] am done with my duty. You [supervisor] cannot find any faults with me. If there were a problem, it's not my fault. I have conveyed my implementation strategies, but my subordinates failed to do what they should do.

The official-centered bureaucracy was seen by most informants as originating from the traditional Chinese culture which demanded responsibility from the subordinates rather than the superiors. In the implementation process in Yangtze Normal University, this tradition was reinforced instead of being eliminated. As many informants worried that the official-centered bureaucracy would create more political/economic tensions between administrators and faculty, if their relationship was not handled appropriately. Moreover, it would also hurt faculty's motivations and job performance, leading to a negative impact on the implementation process of the national policy to achieve its goals.

STAKEHOLDERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD THE NATIONAL POLICY

As aforementioned in Chapter Four, attitudes of stakeholders have great impact on their willingness to carry out a policy (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980, pp. 550-551; Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975, p. 472). This section will briefly present stakeholders' attitudes toward the teachers' new identities and roles as defined by the national policy of teacher education reform.

The Stakeholders' Negative Attitudes toward the New Teachers' Identities and Roles

It is clear in the research data that all the seventeen informants interviewed had a rather clear understanding of the new identities and roles of teachers as appealed by the policy of teacher education reform, though their perceptions varied from one to another. Indeed, all of them agreed that the new identities and roles of teachers are rational transitions Chinese teacher education must make, but again, all of them had

serious concerns about the feasibility of these teachers' new identities and roles in reality.

Many informants believed that the teachers' new identities and roles advocated by the national policy were constrained by several conditions in reality. Central to them was the traditionally defined roles of teachers in the Chinese culture: Both teachers and students have been habituated to the traditional roles of teachers. For example, the new identities and roles of teachers require that teachers should not be authorities, but organizers and guides. In the Chinese reality, students from preschools, elementary and secondary schools, to colleges and universities, have all gotten used to the traditional teachers' identities and roles as transmitters of information whose main responsibility was imposing rote learning on students.

As Chair Beihua put it, "if you [teachers] want to make changes in classroom, you are destined to fail, for students will not be able to adapt themselves to the new situation." Even in the classrooms at a comprehensive university, this would not work. Chair Beihua informed: "I have tried many times but eventually failed: I tried to stimulate students to discuss, but nobody raises their hand to respond to your questions in the classroom." He complained that this happened not only in the classes of the Department of Educational Science, but in classes in other departments as well, hinting that there is a universal impediment to the shifting of teachers' roles. The major reason that caused this problem was critically reviewed by Chair Beihua:

Why [nobody raised their hand to respond]? This is because traditionally China's education has been discouraging students to develop inquiring abilities. That is, in a traditional classroom teachers are responsible for lecturing and students are responsible for listening and taking notes, committing the notes to memory and regurgitating them in test papers.... I can give you an interesting

example. Our college regularly has classes for school principals. When teaching courses for them, I always feel frustrated when organizing discussions in classroom – our principals are very reluctant to speak out and tend to listen to me only. As a result, I have to organize a discussion by calling their names to speak one by one. If our principals are accustomed to this, and our students are accustomed to this, how can you expect our teachers to change their roles? I am really frustrated.

It's really, really hard to change the reality. In China, it's so hard to be a good teacher [tone was repeated and emphasized].... The idea [of teachers' new identities and roles] is very good and new, but the reform is really hard to bring about.

Chair Beihua lamented repeatedly over the difficulty of changing the roles of teachers as outlined by the national policy. When we talked about the topic of teaching reform in the interview, he was apparently enthusiastic about the new roles of teachers but at the same time he was extremely frustrated by the reality.

Chair Beihua's experience was also shared by most other informants. Dean Hengtang critically noted that the national policy of teacher education reform had placed much more pressures on schoolteachers:

For teachers in elementary and high schools, the new identities of teachers have put more social responsibilities and pressures on them. Before [this shift], their jobs were stable, comparatively speaking. This was an important factor that attracted people to join in teaching. But once the teacher profession is opened up for all qualified,²⁸ teachers face a social pressure immediately, [for] any schools can recruit freely better teachers. [Thus] teachers' roles must be shifted. One is to improve their teaching abilities in different subjects. This must be obtained by receiving training in teaching.... Another is to update the concept of teacher education. The foundation of teaching must be updated and adjusted. Under the current situation, I feel that more pressures have been put on teachers.

Many informants admitted that more and more teachers had higher degrees or qualifications, but they also questioned: Does that necessarily mean teachers' academic knowledge and teaching capacities have grown accordingly? It is

²⁸ Teachers used to be recruited from the pool of graduates from teacher education institutions such as normal universities, but now the teaching jobs are opened for everyone who is able to earn her/his qualification or certificate in teaching.

commonly accepted that university professors nowadays had more education or higher degrees than they used to have before, but conversely, their actual teaching capabilities had deteriorated. A similar situation also existed in elementary and secondary schools.

With a lot of teaching and administration experiences in schools, Prof. Peishi challenged the officially promoted new identities of teachers and deeply doubted the applications of these new teachers' roles in practice. Both Prof. Peishi's and Prof. Ouying's views were echoed by other informants who also harbored serious concerns about the feasibility of new teachers' identities and roles in reality.

The Stakeholders' Negative Attitudes toward the National Reform

Most informants seemed to be very enthusiastic about the national reform of teacher education, but were hesitant about its applicability in practice. Major concerns come from the institutional pressures on the teaching profession, in terms of raising the quality of newly recruited students in teacher education and the administration of the teaching profession.

Many informants believed that much importance had been attached to education in recent years, but teacher education has degenerated on the contrary. Why? Some informants doubted if the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform had really been treated as an action priority.

A good example can be found in the historic change of student recruitment in teacher education institutions. In the 1980s, teacher education institutions generally

recruited new students from the first category of qualified high school graduates.²⁹

That meant that all the students recruited were the best from the pool. In the late 1990s, things turned into the opposite. Recently, Yangtze Normal University was unable to recruit high school graduates with high academic achievement.

This had something to do with other national policies that failed to prioritize the reform of teacher education. Before the 1990s, students in teacher education institutions enjoyed governmental subsidies for living expenditures, including room and board. Since the year of 1993 when higher education institutions began to charge tuitions and fees, the subsidies became meaningless in the surging inflation and the expensive fees demanded by universities. Prof. Peishi noted:

Yangtze Normal University is a typical case, for I have done an investigation among our undergraduate students. Not even twenty percent of those we recruited really want to study in teacher education institutions. The best or better students were reluctant to study in teacher education institutions. There were roughly another 20% of students in teacher education institutions who felt that the teaching profession was not bad, thus they voluntarily chose to study in teacher education institutions. My first impression is that in recent years our government has attached more importance to education, but not to teacher education.

Prof. Peishi's observation greatly challenged the policy requirement set by the MOE's *Opinion on the Reform and Development of Teacher Education during the Tenth Five-year National Plan* (The MOE, 2002, February 6). This guiding document

²⁹ Under the central planning system in the 1980s, China's universities/schools used to be categorized into several groups to recruit new students from the pool of qualified high school graduates, based on students' different academic achievement as measured by the National College Entrance Examination. The first recruitment category usually meant that key universities/schools had the priority to recruit new students with the highest academic NCEE achievement. The second recruitment category meant that the non-key universities/schools recruited their new students after the most qualified high school graduates were taken. To guarantee the quality of teacher education, normal universities/schools generally had been given the advantage of the first recruitment category to recruit new students. About the key school system in China, please refer to Footnote 4 in Chapter 2 (pp. 33-34).

urged that policy priorities must be placed for upgrading the system of teacher education. The outcomes of the implementation of the national policy, however, showed there is still a long way to go.

According to Van Meter and Van Horn (1975), the lower intensity of implementers' attitudes toward a policy has a great negative impact on their ability and willingness to involve in the policy implementation (p. 472). Since most informants showed their negative attitudes toward the new teachers' identities and roles, and toward the national reform of teacher education, it is not difficult to estimate how they actually involved themselves and participated in the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform.

INSTITUTIONAL CONFLUENCE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL POLICY

In addition to the above mentioned factors, there were other institutional barriers that counteracted the implementation of the national policy in Yangtze Normal University. One of these institutional barriers consisted of the National Undergraduate Teaching Assessment, the radical expansion of higher education, and the national college entrance examination. They worked together with the above discussed adverse factors to limit the effectiveness of the implementation of the national policy.

The National Undergraduate Teaching Assessment

In 1993, the Ministry of Education launched the Undergraduate Teaching Assessment on Higher Education Institutions (UTAHEI) that aimed to continuously improve the teaching and educational quality in higher education institutions. The UTAHEI adheres to the principle of “promoting reform and construction of university through assessment, combining assessment and construction of university together with laying the emphasis on construction of university.” Major indicators adopted in the national assessment include the school mission, faculty, teaching facility and their utilization, program construction and teaching reform, teaching administration, teaching and learning style, and teaching effectiveness. Each of the seven indicators are “scientifically” designed and categorized into several sub-indicators.³⁰ Since the UTAHEI is adopted nationwide and the result of the evaluation is publicized on the MOE’s official website, every higher education institution takes it as a critical political campaign through which they have to earn a good reputation.

Yangtze Normal University undoubtedly also viewed the UTAHEI as a political campaign to enhance its reputation for the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform. The university has held more than ten special meetings for it since 2004, and the university’s progress in preparing for the UTAHEI was frequently covered in the front page of the issues of *Yangtze Normal University Weekly*. Prof. Ningdong explained why Yangtze Normal University had paid such a serious attention to the Undergraduate Teaching Assessment:

³⁰ Detailed information about the national teaching assessment is available at: http://www.moe.edu.cn/english/higher_h.htm

This assessment is the biggest political event for every university, because its result will be publicized on the internet after the evaluation is done. This will have a predominant impact on the public image of a university and its recruitment of new students. Therefore, our university has also made tremendous efforts to prepare for the assessment. By all means, this assessment is the most important task for us now. In fact, it's the most authoritative and systematic evaluation so far....It has too many implications for every university, especially for normal universities.

In fact, Yangtze Normal University's hectic preparations for the UTAHEI had a very negative impact on the implementation of the national policy, for the preparation for the assessment had to be extremely technical or quantitative as required by the Ministry of Education. Many informants viewed it as a huge waste of teachers' valuable time, for faculty has to commit a lot of efforts to prepare dozens of required documents. During the interview for this study, Chair Beihua kept on complaining that his whole summer in 2005 had been killed by the preparations for the UTAHEI.

In addition, most informants remained indifferent to the UTAHEI and predicted it would eventually fail in achieving its goals in the near future, because it was de facto a bureaucratic style of work which fosters falsifications, exaggerations and formalism. Dean Enwei stated in the following:

The undergraduate teaching assessment requires all full professors to give courses to undergraduate students. How [will the Ministry of Education] check that out? We are required to submit our course timetables. We know the game well....the course timetables will be made up for the assessment. In the timetables, professor XXX is scheduled to give a course, but the name of a teaching assistant will be put into the brackets after the professor's name. Or professor XXX only gives a one-hour course, all the rest will be taught by the assistant. But from the course tables, all professors are giving courses to undergraduates [laugh loudly].

Director Gangyang echoed Dean Enwei's cynicism:

In my view, the assessment is terrible. That is, there is too much formalism, falsifications and meaninglessness....Falsifications have already happened in almost every university that had received the national assessment; the

difference is its extent. There are several types of falsifications: Some data put in the report are totally make-ups – these are typical falsifications; some are not really make-ups – I don't know how to put this – something has been done before but there was no record kept for it, so now record is being made up as evidence of work having been done for the assessment. This can also be called as a falsification, am I right?

Viewed from a rational perspective, the UTAHEI supposedly served as a powerful and effective tool for the MOE and universities to evaluate the overall conditions of a university. In Yangtze Normal University, it was to be an opportunity to enhance the implementation of the national policy. Most implementers and participants in Yangtze Normal University, however, observed that it had considerably counterworked on the effectiveness of the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform.

The Radical Expansion of Higher Education

With the implementation of the national policy of higher education expansion, Yangtze Normal University had a student population of 27,500 by 2005 on its three campuses.³¹ The rapid expansion in Yangtze Normal University has undoubtedly put high pressure on the implementation of the national policy of teacher education. For instance, in 2003, new entrants of Yangtze Normal University even could not find any vacant beds available in dormitories on campuses. The university finally decided to postpone the registration for all newcomers up to three months.

Most informants viewed that the implementation of the national policy of higher education expansion since the late 1990s to have led to the decline of teaching quality in Yangtze Normal University. Director Futang shared his own experience to

³¹ For more statistics about the student expansion in Yangtze Normal University, please refer to Figure 6.1 in Chapter 6 (p. 157).

explain why the quality of teaching and research declined after the expansion:

I basically agree with that [the quality of teaching and research has declined recently]. From the date when I began to work for Yangtze Normal University, that is, from the 1980s up to the late 1990s, I felt that my personal teaching quality had been gradually improving. Generally speaking, everybody seemed to be on the same pace on this campus then....In recent years of expansion, I agree with the opinion – [teachers are] weighed down with teaching and the heavy workload is really hard to cope with. For me, I have to teach various courses such as those for undergraduate students, graduate students and principal students, and other courses. It's extremely unbearable. And, the total number of faculty members is kept in its original size.... The workload has tripled from it used to be. Under this situation, apparently, the expansion has definitely a negative impact on the teaching quality.

Teaching internship was commonly viewed as one of the key steps to train highly qualified teachers. Yangtze Normal University used to provide a 2-3 months' teaching internship to the fourth year students up to the mid-1990s. The students taking internship was generally consisted of 8-12 students led by 2-3 faculty members on a school site. After the late 1990s when Yangtze Normal University rapidly expanded its size, as Chair Beihua and Dean Enwei put it, there was no on-site advisors supervising the students any more, and teaching internship was reduced to a very limited period of 2-3 weeks.

The implementation of the national policy of higher education expansion also significantly increased the workload of faculty's teaching and administrators' management on campus. Dean Enwei shared his difficulty in being in charge of the teaching affairs for the College of Educational Science. Taking an example of student internship again:

We have a lot of problems that constrained the reform [the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform]. Before the enrollment expansion, one program used to have around forty or fifty undergraduate students. Sending two to three teachers [to internship site] – each leading around fifteen students – would be fine. Now we have more than three or four

hundred students in a program. For example, this year we have one hundred and twenty students majored in the psychology program. It will need at least ten faculty members for all the students if we send each group with twelve students to one single school [for internship]. Once the ten teachers go away with these students, there will be nobody in our college who can teach psychology. I don't have any options – I cannot send all of them out. Isn't this a big problem? Where is teacher education being led to?

The national policy of higher education expansion was originally launched by the central government to sustain the growth of the national economy.³² This rational decision, however, did not serve at all the national policy of teacher education which had its goals set to build up a highly qualified teacher workforce. In the case of Yangtze Normal University, as demonstrated above, the radical expansion of higher education terribly backfired on the effective implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform.

The National College Entrance Examination

China's National College Entrance Examination (NCEE) has been for decades a nationwide competition by which high school graduates struggle for their college rights. Prior to the early 1990s, more than twenty million students had to compete with each other for only 0.62 million university openings. The very limited university openings tremendously intensified the competition in the annual national university entrance examinations. The National College Entrance Examination has been so powerful that every senior high school in China seems to have become a training camp for the national examination. In addition, the purpose of education, according to many principals and parents, is reduced to preparing students for the national examination. After the radical expansion of higher education since the 1990s, the

³² It was a measure to get parents and higher education institutions to spend money during a time of economic deflation in the late 1990s in China.

opportunities for college learning have been remarkably expanded, but the national examination is still very competitive since most high school graduates want to study in top-tier universities.

Although the national policy of teacher education reform advocated the new teachers' identities and roles such as teachers as reflective researchers or reflective practitioners, there is one and only one role for teachers to play in reality: They are gatekeepers and examination trainers. This is because the real criterion for evaluating the teaching quality of a schoolteacher remains limited to a sole indicator: the promotion rate of students to universities, especially to key universities. Under the circumstance, teachers are not able to learn how to transform their identities, nor are they able to find extra time to do so; furthermore, parents as well as principals would not allow them to do so.

Prof. Ouying was a mother of a lovely daughter who just became a freshman in a national key university by passing the competitive National College Entrance Examination. She detailed her observations on how schoolteachers played their roles in students' learning from a mother's view:

In many county high schools, students usually study until eleven thirty in the midnight, and teachers are still reluctant to let them go to bed. Many students even prepare for the National College Entrance Examination until two to three o'clock in the morning. A very close friend of my daughter failed in the examination this year, and has been studying at a county high school for retaking the exam. She told me she would not be allowed to go to sleep until two to three o'clock in the early morning every day. But, there were still too many students who were squeezing into that school this year. Why? Many students and their parents just look at its high promotion rate of their graduates. They know studying in this school is extremely hard and unendurable, and the financial cost is also high. Many students say they are studying in the dungeon, or are living in hell. They are not dynamic students any more; they are actually examination machines. And these schools become training camps for the

National Entrance Exam.

Local educational administrators continue to see the promotion rate of graduates as the cardinal guidance for schooling and as the sole criterion to evaluate the educational jobs principals and teachers are doing. What the ordinary people and students expect are all one thing: The promotion rate of graduates, no matter how hard the training is. This phenomenon is called *the model of county high schools* [*xianzhong moshi*].³³ Not only is there one county's high school like this, there are too many county high schools like this—"we [county high schools] do not have enough resources, the only thing we have is that we can train our students harder and harder."

Prof. Ouying continued:

From the learning experiences my daughter has, however, I can see that city high schools have more or less met some requirements of the national reform.... Under such a strong social pressure, schools have actually only one requirement for teachers' job: Training students to pass the national examinations. What else can you expect from them? If I were the principal, although I might have learned a lot about modern theories of education and I know this [exam-training] is not good at all, I don't have any other options.

From Prof. Ouying's experience, the National College Entrance Examination

and the promotion rate of graduates severely confine the applications of the new identities and roles of teachers in reality. Rather, the national examination becomes the sole goal of education and the only criterion for evaluating a teacher's job performance. It would not help much at all at local school level even if there was a faithful implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform in a normal university. In other words, even if the prospective teachers in teacher education institutions are educated with new identities and roles of teachers, they would not be able to play these roles in their future classroom teaching.

³³ The "model of county high schools", termed by Prof. Ouying, referred to schools that had less financial and teaching resources than key schools. With limited funds and teaching support, county high schools generally had to heavily rely on harder efforts of teachers and students to catch up similar or higher promotion rate of graduates with key high schools. Mostly often, these harder efforts included much longer learning and teaching time, more rigorous disciplines, and more test-skill training, by sacrificing students' social studies, group activities, and community involvement. About the key school system in China, please refer to Footnote 4 in Chapter 2 (pp. 33-34).

In sum, stakeholders' attitudes toward the implementation of the national policy show that although the national reform of teacher education may be a great policy to building up a highly qualified teacher workforce, there definitely is a long way to go. The adverse factors to the implementation practice include the university leaders' weak awareness of the national policy, the decline of teaching quality, and the constraints from the official-centered bureaucracy. In addition, the National Undergraduate Teaching Assessment, the radical expansion of higher education, and the National College Entrance Examination all act as major institutional barriers affecting the successful implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform. All of these constraints and impediments created high political and economic tensions and conflicts throughout the implementation process, leading to inconsistencies between policy goals and outcomes of the implementation of the national policy.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSIONS, REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At this point, I have provided a comprehensive analysis about how a higher teacher education institution implemented China's national policy of teacher education reform since the 1990s. In this chapter, the research questions of this study will be revisited, bringing back the theoretical frameworks and functional analytic model to reflect upon the findings of this study. Drawing from China's experience, this section will discuss implications for policy studies, and will propose recommendations for policy implementation. At the end of the chapter, future research orientations are contemplated.

THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS REVISITED

This explanatory case study has been designed to understand how a higher teacher education institution in China responded to the national policy of teacher education reform since the 1990s. Some major components of the implementation process have been examined to address the following questions:

1. What policies have been put forward in China's teacher education reform

- since the 1990s and what is its institutional and sociopolitical context?
2. How is the teacher education reform perceived and interpreted by local policy implementers and participants?
 3. How have teacher education institutions reshaped their institutional goals and strategies to respond to the national policy?
 4. How have local policy players been involved in the implementation process of the national policy?
 5. What institutional changes have taken place due to the implementation of the national reform? How are these institutional changes evaluated? And what are the problems and challenges?

Findings from the research, when reflected upon using the rational and critical frameworks, present various – sometimes conflicting – interpretations for the implementation of China's national policy of teacher education reform.

Policy Implementation as Rational Collective Behaviors

A cardinal assumption of the rational framework is that human behavior is purposively rational and that an implementation process is thought of “as purposive, goal-directed activity” by a rational unified actor (Allison & Zelikow, 1999, p. 17). When the rational framework is applied, the policy actions of China's teacher education reform can be viewed as rational collective behaviors, in terms of policy initiation and formation, implementation process and evaluations. As aforementioned, the Chinese political system remained highly centralized with a unified polity under the CPC leadership. The CPC repeatedly urged that “the centralization and unity of the Party and State are where the fundamental interests of the people of all ethnic groups lie. The whole Party and the entire nation must maintain a high degree of unity with regard to the guiding ideology, directives, principles and policies and major questions of principle” (Jiang, 2002, November 8). This requirement has been pervasively propagandized throughout the everyday life of ordinary Chinese people

and has become what John Campbell termed as the “national mood” (Kingdon, 2003), to achieve the goals of national policies.

Since the 1990s the Chinese government has released more than a dozen of national policy documents, consistently enforcing the same policy goal of “building up a highly qualified teacher workforce” (The MOE, 2002, February 6) and urging a rational shift of teachers’ roles. The new identities of teachers defined by these documents were centered on *teachers as professional learners* and *teachers as reflective researchers*. The policy goal and teachers’ new identities were based on two major theories: the modernization theory and the human capital theory. On the one hand, Chinese policymakers have made every effort to follow the modernization theory for revitalizing China in general. On the other hand, the Chinese government has adopted the human capital theory for addressing educational issues such as the preparation and training of a teacher workforce which was viewed by Chinese policymakers as “the foundation of socialist modernization and construction...the hope for rejuvenating our nation, and the hope for rejuvenating education is teachers” (The CPCCC & the State Council, 1993, February 13). Based on the above rationales, the Chinese government has drafted numerous policies to change teachers’ traditional roles in order to improve and strengthen the teacher workforce through the national policy of teacher education reform.

The national policy began with identification of substantial problems. For example, the Ministry of Education identified in 1999 that the supply of teachers by higher teacher education institutions was not sufficient, that normal schools were over-expanded, that the structure and distribution of teacher education institutions

were not optimal, and that the continuous education of schoolteachers was in great demand (The Ministry of Education, 1999, March 16). Implementation guidelines and strategies setting new standards and requirements for teacher education were laid out by the policymakers.

The national policy of teacher education reform was warmly embraced basically by all of the seventeen interviewees. They realized that the new identities and roles of teachers were rational decisions to transform Chinese teachers' traditional roles and they applauded the transformation outlined by the national policy of teacher education reform. They understood why the national policy of teacher education reform was initiated from a rational viewpoint, noting that the radical expansion of higher education has demanded the traditionally independent, closed teacher education system to adopt an open system to meet the worldwide trend of teacher education development.

For the effective implementation of the national policy, Yangtze Normal University employed its official communication system, i.e., *chuanda*, to communicate the policy with its grassroots. This form of communication system became a powerful ideological control to enforce the national policy of teacher education reform at the university/college levels. By *chuanda*, most CPC leaders as well as other administrators in Yangtze Normal University got familiar with the national policy of teacher education reform.

Yangtze Normal University adopted substantial institutional strategies to enhance the quality of teaching and learning through quantified measures, upgrade teaching/learning programs and facilities for expanding educational capacity,

strengthen the distinguishing feature of teacher education, and reorganize academic departments/colleges. As reported by most informants, the implementers and participants at Yangtze Normal University were “centrally coordinated” in various forms of involvement in the implementation process. For example, most implementers responded that they were required to carry out routinely whatever the university or college leaders asked them to do, and many faculty were also involved more or less in related strategic planning and activities for the implementation of the national policy.

Changes taking place in Yangtze Normal University as a result of the implementation of the national policy have been promising: The university has started many new degree programs; it has systematically transformed from the academic-year system to a credit system; it has tried to improve teaching quality with a newly enforced teaching evaluation system. More specifically, there have been significant changes in prioritizing the teaching and learning of teacher education. For instance, Yangtze Normal University has invested a huge sum of money on expanding IT applications in teaching, and course plans have been revised to suit the new standards and requirements. In addition, rigorous evaluations, such as the annual university official evaluation and the upcoming Undergraduate Teaching Assessment on Higher Education Institutions by the Ministry of Education, have been adopted to evaluate the policy outcomes. From its initiation to implementation and then to evaluation, the national policy development of teacher education reform has followed a linear, sequential, logical path, as theorized by Jenkins (1978, p. 17) and Sabatier and Mazmanian (1978, p. 26).

In the case of China's national policy of teacher education reform, rational collective policy actions were evidently observed. Specifically, it was means-ends driven and followed goal directed principle. There was a cause-effect link between the theories of action and the stated outcomes. The implementation was designed as one of stages in a linearly advanced policy flow employing the most effective communication form available. Efforts were made to optimize the goals and to adopt alternative strategies for substantial problem resolutions. There was an adherence to scientific evaluations, and so forth. But these interpretations are not sufficient to answer why the intended outcomes were not strictly consistent with the policy goals and requirements as originally planned. In addition, the rational framework ignored political conflicts, e.g., conflict of interest between different stakeholders (Baldrige, Curtis, Ecker & Riley, 1977). An alternative framework, i.e., the critical framework, helps overcome these weaknesses and shed light on the dynamic processes that made the policy outcomes inconsistent with the assumptions of the rational framework.

Policy Implementation as Critical Institutional Transformations

As I have introduced in Chapter Four, the critical framework views policy process including implementation as a means to redistribute scarce social resources and transform conventional institutions so that the status quo of social inequality can be changed (Bensimon & Marshall, 1997, p. 10). In other words, a policy action is a dynamic process of institutional transformation driven by various interests and power relationships.

Political tensions and conflicts were inherent in the implementation process and greatly shaped the institutional changes in Yangtze Normal University. This is

particularly the case when the relationships between the national policy of teacher education reform and other national policies are examined. In other words, power relations and struggles have been intermixed during the process of the university implementing both the national teacher education reform policy and the higher education expansion policy. Especially, the expansion of higher education has affected the distribution of resources, organization of programs and changes in curriculum. The dramatic increase in student enrollment diverts implementors as well as the faculty from focusing on the requirements of the national teacher education reform. The expansion of enrollment intensifies inequality between leaders and faculty, and sacrifice the quality of education for the future teachers. Many informants reported that the student enrollment climbed up so fast that recruitment of qualified faculty members could not keep up with the demand. Prof. Quguo critically observed the negative impact brought by higher education expansion on the wellbeing of students and teachers at Yangtze Normal University:

The teaching quality is declining. It means that students are the most exploited. The decline of teaching quality causes a big loss to the students. Teachers are too [the exploited]. If viewed from their input and reward, teachers have worked harder than ever before, [but] their reward is relatively small....I cannot bet that the workload of Chinese teachers in higher education institutions is the heaviest in the world. If considering their psychological stress, I can say that they face the most difficult situation in the world. Schoolteachers are the same. Nowadays, a lot of them have psychological problems due to job stress – this never happened before.

It is obvious that leaders of the university have implemented both the teacher education reform policy and higher education expansion policy by putting more pressures on the faculty in terms of heavy workload; the new faculty evaluation system effectively serves as a mechanism to hold teachers responsible for implementing the teacher education reform policy in the classroom level. However,

such a system was not instituted for the leaders, which indicated high inequality in power between the leaders and the faculty. The complaints from the faculty, and the actions they have taken, indicate that tensions existed throughout the implementation process, and faculty had used their own power to seek for a balance of power in the process.

The implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform was hampered by the official-centered bureaucracy. This political system ensures that there existed income gap and gap of political power between administrators and faculty. The inequality of the power relationship between administrators and faculty is one of the reasons that many faculty members seek administrative jobs on campus or other incomes outside campus. In the case of Yangtze Normal University, however, faculty members took tangible actions to fight against their unequal power relationship with administrators. They have realized that their hard work was exploited relentlessly and they were oppressed by the dominant bureaucracy in the implementation process of the national policy. They were no longer satisfied with their unequal economic status and their passive political roles in the implementation process. They have chosen substantial strategies such launching public opinions, political disobedience and collective bargain to fight against their unequal sociopolitical relationship with administrators. As a result, their political struggles via substantial strategies yielded an institutional transformation in Yangtze Normal University such as the change of power and economic relationship between them and the administrators. Faculty members' constant struggles against their unequal socioeconomic relationship with dominant policy players vividly showed how the

notion of teachers as transformative intellectuals (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985) was practiced in the implementation process of the national policy.

From the critical framework, the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform was no longer seen as merely rational collective behaviors. Instead, political tensions and conflicts were universal and pervasive within it, for policy actors were all “political creatures (a fact that too many policy analysts forget) in political communities” (Marshall, 1997, p. 5). From policy initiation, to implementation process, to policy outcome and evaluation, stakeholders, especially the exploited and oppressed teachers, fought against the status quo of institutional legitimacy for the change of their socioeconomic status. In this sense, the implementation was a dynamic process for institutional transformations converged within a system and with its environment, i.e., the policy environment and the political system (Jenkins, 1978, p. 21). The critical framework provides an alternative lens to look into the dynamic implementation process by which how a higher teacher education institution has responded to China’s national policy of teacher education reform since the 1990s.

THE CHINA POLICY CASE AND NEW DIMENSIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION STUDIES

The Chinese policy case offers a great opportunity for policy researchers to practice policy analysis from both a rational framework and a critical framework. It also provides a great opportunity to see how the culture plays a crucial role in the success or failure of a policy implementation. This section reflects on how this case

study may shed light on policy analysis and policy implementation studies overall.

The Power and Limitations of the Multiple Frameworks

The multiple frameworks empower policy analysts with different perspectives to look at key aspects, components and unique foci of policy action. One framework may bring in more meaningful insights for certain aspects of policy analysis than another. For example, from the rational perspective, policy actions are usually viewed as a cold, rigorous empirical process directed by clearly defined goals and driven by means-ends relationship. In the China case, the diagnosed substantial problems of teacher workforce and teacher education, linearly developed policy path, mostly efficient way of pursuing clearly-defined goals, and strong theories of action such as modernization theory and human capital theory, all showed that the rational perspective has dramatic impacts on policy analysis. The rational framework, however, is criticized as “more an ideal than an actual description of how people act” (Baldrige, 1977), and political constraints often undermine the power of the rational framework. Other perspectives may have stronger power to examine the actual political constraints.

A dynamic implementation process is observed when critical framework is employed. In this process of policy action, various players actively seek their diverse political interests. The power of critical framework enables policy analysts to pay more attention to the dynamic, conflicting process instead of only to the linear, logic policy flow. Viewed from the critical framework, tensions and conflicts abound in the implementation process, as Dardach argued that “the bargaining and maneuvering, the pulling and hauling, of the policy-adoption process carries over into the policy-

implementation process” (1977, p. 38). In addition, the critical framework views the implementation process as an instrument to change the unequal status quo. In China, the implementation of the national policy of teacher education was to a great extent a process in which stakeholders fought for transforming their institutional and personal status.

The multiple frameworks as adopted in this study may help policy analysts to deepen their understandings of policy action in a comprehensive way, for the multiple frameworks help unearth “aspects and intricacies of policy that would be easily missed with a single lens look” (Malen & Knapp, 1997). In this sense, rational and critical frameworks together offer a much richer understanding of policy action, since each of them has its own strengths and limitations for policy studies. Viewed from the rational framework, the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform in China was understood as a linearly developed process to resolve the substantial problems of the teacher education system by collective policy players. The policy action was advanced and developed to meet the need of the rapidly changing society. The critical framework suggested that the stakeholders of the national policy were not acting collectively in a unitary and rational way. They were diverse conflicting groups who were battling for their own legitimacy and benefits. The implementation process became a vehicle for redistribution of various benefits and resources among the interest groups. The policy outcomes were contributed by battling policy actors, conflicting cultural and market forces, and some counteractive factors such as the implementation of another national policy of higher education expansion.

The multiple frameworks can be helpful for other topics of policy studies. For example, other policy actions in China's setting, e.g., higher education expansion, privatization of schooling, etc., can benefit from these frameworks, improving our overall understanding of policymaking and implementation in China. For example, the multiple frameworks help us to examine how the national policy of higher education expansion was initiated, developed and implemented, what roles civil society play in the process and how higher education as public and private goods were advocated and debated throughout the policy action. These investigations might provide unique stories about how Chinese policy players act to improve the country's education system.

The multiple frameworks do have limitations for policy analysis. In this study, it is obvious that the overwhelming influence of centralized political control over all aspects of life and work in a higher teacher education institution can hardly be fully captured by either the rational or critical framework. The limitation of the critical framework is especially significant, for under such a top-down hierarchical political order in China, the roles that faculty can play in changing the policies of reform, and their possibility of playing a major role in making institutional/cultural changes are very limited. Leaders themselves, also, were restricted as to what they can do, although theoretically they can also be transformative leaders and intellectuals. They were rendered also passive implementers of the national policy. Thus, there are obvious constraints through the lens of the critical framework to examine the China policy case.

The Power and Limitations of the Functional Analytic Model

The functional analytic model adopted by this study is powerful in terms of helping this study to narrow down and focus on five major components for the details of the implementation process in China. It centers my examination on policy delivery and communication in the implementation; institutional goals and strategies of the implementation; involvement and participation in the implementation process; outcomes and evaluations of the implementation; and institutional confluence of other policy actions/factors and stakeholder's attitudes to the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform.

The functional analytic model helps identify processes and actions that enable the study to examine the dynamic implementation process; it served as a powerful instrument to employ the rational and critical frameworks to investigate the top-down delivery of the national policy for teacher education reform and the contests embedded within the process. The functional analytic model also helps me to map the differentiated roles the implementers and participants played, the confluence of other national policies of educational reform, the institutional factors and larger sociopolitical impacts on the implementation process.

By the functional analytic model, this study paid serious attention to the intersection of the national policy of teacher education reform with other national policies such as higher education expansion, and identified that the mission ambiguity and the decline of teaching quality due to the radical expansion of higher education backfired on the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform in Yangtze Normal University.

In addition, the functional analytic model navigated this study to the examination of the inclusion of China's cultural influence in the implement process of the national policy. The cultural influence, which will be detailed in the next section in this Chapter, explained how the official-centered bureaucracy impacted the outcomes of the implementation of the national policy.

The functional analytic model for this study also has its shortcomings in studying the complicated implementation process of the national policy of teacher education reform. For example, it fails to examine the implementation stages of the national policy of teacher education reform, as Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) advocated in their skeletal flow diagram of the variables involved in the implementation process (p. 542). Moreover, it does not focus on the adjustment or revision of the national policy for teacher education reform, nor does it pay sufficient attention to how the resources, especially financial resources, are allocated in the implementation. These shortcomings limit the interpretations of this study on the implementation process of the national policy of teacher education reform.

The Power of Traditional Culture

As introduced in Chapter One, the significance of this study may partly rely on its discovery on how the factor of traditional Chinese culture contributes to the success or failure of the implementation of the national policy. This shall have a special meaning for offsetting the hegemony of European and North American scholarship in policy analysis. Jenkins (1978) argued that "public policy is best understood by considering the operation of a political system in its environment" (p. 21). He did not mention at all the role of traditional culture in policy studies, however.

Neither have other Western policy analysts such as Van Meter and Van Horn (1975), or Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980), directed much attention to the influence of traditional culture. But they did inspire this study to pay serious attention to the cultural influence in the process of policy implementation. As I have illustrated in the operational analytic map for this study (please refer to Figure 4.6, Chapter Four), sociopolitical/cultural influences are seen as key factors that impact the outcomes of public policy.

Since China has a heavy tradition of central governance for more than two thousand years, this study designed a special interview question inquiring into the extent the implementation model in Yangtze Normal University has to do with traditional Chinese culture. All informants responded that the way the national policy was implemented in Yangtze Normal University, undoubtedly, was highly shaped by the official-centered bureaucracy which is embedded in traditional Chinese culture. For example, most informants saw the official-centered bureaucracy as a strong traditional culture force that played a pivotal role in the success or failure of the policy implementation. Chair Beihua put it in this way:

Well, the impact of the official-centered bureaucracy is tremendous, not only some. In China, why are there so many people willing to be officials? One reason is the official-centered culture, really is involved with special interest. This is what everybody knows. An official is a policymaker, as long as a policy benefits them [administrators], they will do whatever in their power to grip them. If it does not benefit them, they may not even touch it.

Another negative impact brought about by traditional Chinese culture was more red tapes and officialism, and less innovation. Of course, informants also noted that there were also positive impacts associated with traditional Chinese culture in the implementation process. Based on the perceptions and interpretations of most

informants, the traditional Chinese culture plays a central and dominant role in the implementation process of the national policy. Therefore, policy analysts must have a high awareness, especially in a sociopolitical context where there is long history, that traditional culture may have profound and crucial influence on policy action, including the implementation process.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation case of Yangtze Normal University presented by this study offers some practical experiences for policy implementation. They concern high awareness of policy significance, consistent implementation of policy goals, effective evaluations of outcomes and the need to deal with constraining institutional factors and barriers.

Implementers Must Have a High Awareness of Policy Significance

According to Van Meter and Van Horn, the disposition of implementers is key for public policy to be effectively delivered since all other components must be filtered through the perceptions of the implementers (1975, p. 463). Their view, however, is conversely evidenced throughout the implementation of the national policy of teacher education in Yangtze Normal University.

Many informants complained that the leaders of Yangtze Normal University did not fully recognize the importance of teacher education reform. The implementation of the national policy was therefore rather hesitant. An example was that the university had planned for the new College of Teacher Education for more than two

years but was still awaiting a final decision. Chair Beihua advised that the first thing the university leaders needed to do was to enhance their understanding of the national policy of teacher education reform. He insisted that “all will be empty talk, if a president is not a professional, does not learn something about educational theories or is incapable of teacher training and administration.” Many informants supported that the critical role of teacher education has not been given its deserved position in the reform of Yangtze Normal University.

As reported by many informants, the lack of policy recognition by key implementers greatly contributed to the unsatisfactory outcomes of the implementation of the national policy in Yangtze Normal University. Therefore, the first recommendation for policy implementation is that the implementors must have a high awareness of the significance of the public policy.

Institutional Implementation Goals Must Be Consistent with the Public Policy

Although the implementation process may vary from one to another, the success or failure of an implementation process is commonly studied by examining the consistency between policy goals and outcomes (Elmore, 1978, p. 195; Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1980, p. 542; Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975, p. 459). In addition, in the view of Van Meter and Van Horn, the higher the goal consensus is, the larger the amount of change (outcomes of policy implementation) will be, and vice versa (1975, p. 460). When this study tried to reveal how the institutional goals of Yangtze Normal University were developed, it was surprising to find, unexpectedly, that the institutional goals of Yangtze Normal University had actually deviated from, or at least were inconsistent with, the requirements of the national policy of teacher

education reform. Conversely, the mission of Yangtze Normal University has become ambiguous in terms of its original teacher education identity.

The ambiguity of the university goals has had a negative impact on the implementation of the national reform of teacher education reform. For example, most informants held negative perceptions on the transition of their university's identity. As many informants critically revealed that teacher education used to be the traditional feature and strength of Yangtze Normal University but now it was neglected. Many informants observed that in recent years, the educational skills of graduates from Yangtze Normal University had been not even competitive with those from less prestigious normal universities. They also witnessed that the institutional social status and public image of Yangtze Normal University had significantly dropped. To a certain extent, the ambiguous policy goals have hindered the implementation of the national policy in Yangtze Normal University. Hence, the second recommendation for the implementation of a public policy becomes that the institutional policy goals must be set consistently with the requirements of public policy.

Evaluation Must Be Enhanced to Ensure Policy Adjustment

Evaluation is widely accepted as a crucial step in the implementation process. Browne and Wildavsky (1983) believed that "evaluation is a necessary component of program development and implementation," and that evaluation "can contribute to a continuing refinement in comprehension of why programs and policies do or do not work" (Browne & Wildavsky, 1983, p. 201; p. 182). Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) saw policy outcomes technically as a dependent variable, which provides feedback

for major policy revision (p. 542). Evaluation has been adopted as an important indicator to look into the complicated implementation process.

Three major official forms of evaluation on the implementation of the national policy were found in Yangtze Normal University: The university official evaluation system, the university regular or irregular evaluations on special job performance, and the ad hoc evaluations conducted by provincial or state administration of education. The first form of evaluation was criticized by some informants as “a waste” in terms of it being a kind of formalism. The second one was blamed by some informants as putting additional job pressure on teachers. There was much criticism for the third one too, since it involved a lot of formalisms and falsifications. All of the three forms can be termed as “pseudo-evaluations” (Dunn, 1981, p. 343), as testified by many informants with pessimistic comments.

Apart from the three forms of evaluations, none of the seventeen informants responded that there were any independent third parties or professional organizations involved that provided “true evaluation”³⁴ on the outcomes of the implementation of the national policy. Although evaluation and implementation are generally carried on by the same people, evaluation from independent third party or professional organization may greatly benefit the revision or adjustment of policy actions in the future. Thus, the third recommendation for policy implementation is: Evaluation as a crucial step must be enhanced to ensure the actions and alternative measures for policy adjustment.

³⁴ Please refer to: An analysis of alternative approaches to evaluation (Stufflebeam & Webster, 1981, p. 71).

Unfavorable Constraints and Impediments Must Be Seriously Considered

Van Meter and Van Horn claimed that the characteristics of the implementing agencies and their sociopolitical conditions have profound impact on the implementation process (1975, p. 474). To achieve the goals of implementation, unfavorable institutional factors and barriers must be seriously considered.

Many informants of this study reported that the rapid backsliding of teaching quality at Yangtze Normal University in recent years was contradictorily coupled with the implementation of the national policy of higher education expansion. While the goal of the national policy of teacher education reform was defined as “building up a highly qualified teacher workforce” (The MOE, 2002, February 6), the implementation of the national policy of higher education expansion created a backlash against the national policy of teacher education reform.

The counteractive factors were not limited to the national policy of higher education expansion. For example, the transition toward a market economy, the stakeholders’ negative attitudes, the official-centered bureaucracy, the decline of teaching quality etc., together played adverse roles in the implementation of the national policy, as testified by many informants.

Therefore, policy actions must consider the unfavorable institutional factors and barriers which affect the success or failure of the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform.

RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Up to this point, I have endeavored to address the most significant components of this study, providing information on institutional settings and background, attempting to use multiple frameworks for addressing the research questions. I have discussed several implications of findings for policy studies and given practical recommendations for policy implementation based on the empirical findings presented in this study. Based on the findings and conclusions, suggestions for future research are given below.

Conducting Multiple-Case Study

As illustrated in Chapter Five, this study adopted a single-case design and purposefully selected an information-rich, typical case to look for in-depth explanation of the implementation process of China's national policy. Although the single-case design greatly benefited this study in terms of the limited time and energy spent on the site, the thick description of the case from standardized data and so on, it does have some weaknesses. The vulnerability of a single-case design is bounded to the nature of a single case: an extremely limited case that might not be representative at all. In other words, it provides a weak basis for generalization to other settings.

To minimize the possibilities of misrepresentation, a variant of case study approach, i.e., a multiple-case design, is recommended for future research. As Herriott and Firestone (1983) argued, the multiple-case designs greatly strengthen the generalizability of findings while preserving in-depth description (p. 14). Yin (2003) supportively maintains that multiple-case designs have some obvious advantages. A distinct advantage is that the evidence from multiple cases is often considered more

compelling and the overall study is therefore regarded as being more robust (Yin, 2003, p. 46).

Higher teacher education institutions are not limited to provincial normal universities, but cover a large range of teacher education institutions such as national normal key universities, provincial key normal universities, and local normal professional colleges, etc. Although provincial key normal universities are the largest base for teacher education in China, and the findings of the typical case purposefully selected by this study are generalizable to other settings, a multiple-case design consisted of all three types of teacher education institutions will significantly extend the generalizability of its evidence to other settings.

Studying the Confluence of Other Policy Actions

The functional analytic model of this study helps to disclose how the confluence of China's other educational policy actions impacted seriously on the outcomes of the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform. These policy actions, e.g., the expansion of higher education and the national undergraduate teaching assessment, affected the outcomes of the implementation of the national policy in many ways. On the one hand, they created many opportunities for the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform. On the other hand, they converged as institutional barriers or unfavorable constraints to the effectiveness of the implementation. While this study has paid certain attention to the expansion of higher education, how other policy actions have intersected with each other and how the confluence of them affected the outcomes of the national policy of teacher education remains unclear. Therefore, the study on the confluence of other

policy actions and factors is needed in the future.

Studying the Influence of Traditional Culture

Policy choices are believed to be embedded in a dominant cultural context and determined by values that frame actor preferences in a particular social or organizational situation (Christensen, 2003, p. 79). In this sense, traditional culture as a key variable determines the success or failure of a policy action. This is particularly true when the implementation process of the national policy was examined by this study.

One of the objectives of this study was to reveal if traditional culture plays any role in the implementation process of the national policy. As mentioned before, I have realized that it did play a powerful role in the policy implementation process. However, how the traditional Chinese culture played its pivotal role in the policy action remained unidentified and how it influenced the implementation process of the national policy was not clear. These inquiries become critical in further understanding the Chinese policy case as well as in developing new theory for policy analysis.

Studying the New Initiatives

When I was back from field work in the October of 2005, two new initiatives were officially under planning for the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform in 2006. One was the establishment of the new College of Teacher Education, and another was the hectic preparation for the nationwide Undergraduate Teaching Assessment on Higher Education Institutions in 2006. When I was in the field, it seemed to me that everybody – administrators, faculty, staff or

students, was frenetically involved in the two initiatives.

These two initiatives have special meaning to the implementation of the national policy. The establishment of the new College of Teacher Education has been planned for a couple of years, based on the original model of the College of Educational Science. The new college will be a stronger college for teacher education as it will consolidate all relevant programs and teaching units into one college. The Undergraduate Teaching Assessment on Higher Education Institutions by the Ministry of Education was not originally created for the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform, but was seen by the leaders, administrators as well as faculty members as a practical instrument to implement the national policy of teacher education reform in Yangtze Normal University.

The new initiatives generate at least two research questions for future study: (a) how the new College of Teacher Education carries out the national policy of teacher education reform? and (b) how the Undergraduate Teaching Assessment on Higher Education Institutions affects the teaching quality of Yangtze Normal University, and the implementation of the national policy of teacher education reform?

Examination of these research questions will enrich our understanding in various ways. They can serve as extensions of the present study and can develop into a longitudinal multiple-case study in the future, making the study more informative, more comprehensive, and more compelling.

CONCLUSION

When the research questions of this study were reviewed in the beginning of this chapter, dissimilar interpretations were captured by the rational and critical frameworks to explain the complicated implementation process of the national policy of teacher education reform in Yangtze Normal University. The contrasting power and limitations of the two frameworks and the functional analytic model, and the culture dimension in the implementation process were observed for policy studies. Keeping in mind the valuable Chinese experiences, I proposed several recommendations for the practice of policy implementation. In addition, I believe the research recommendation for the future will make this study a difference in terms of more informative findings, more comprehensive understanding, and more compelling interpretations.

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